



Postsecondary/Collegiate Handbook: Starting & Growing Your Chapter

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Why Start a Postsecondary/Collegiate (PS/C) Chapter?

As a chapter start-up leader, you have a valuable opportunity to create an exceptional student organization at your respective institution. You can lead the chapter in a direction that clearly supports the purpose of HOSA.

HOSA—Future Health Professionals is indeed 100% health; however, it is important to recognize that health touches a plethora of diverse fields. Therefore, it is important to extend involvement in your chapter to students pursuing and not pursuing pre-health majors and fields of study. HOSA's diversity and inclusion of diverse areas of study makes it unique and, therefore, will appeal to a larger body of students! Furthermore, HOSA also benefits those still considering whether or not to pursue a health career. Involvement in HOSA and the various opportunities that it presents to students to learn about healthcare can prove to be monumental in helping them decide. College students change their majors often. However, regardless of their major, they can still find opportunities and success within HOSA.

This manual is here to serve as a guide to students planning to start a postsecondary or collegiate chapter at their higher-education institution or university. Consult this manual and your school's new student organization start-up tips to help ensure an efficient and successful chapter affiliation process.



The only pre-health organization on the postsecondary/collegiate level to offer international competition for all health sciences.



Gain access to the exclusive HOSA Career Center, internships, and numerous leadership opportunities.



Network with 290,000+ current active members, & 3 million+ alumni.



Fund your education with our HOSA Scholarships. \$3,127,696 was given in 2023!

Commonly Referenced Terms

Chartered Association. This refers to the larger nation, territory, or state that your chapter would fall under. For example, the Chartered Association for the University of Texas would be Texas, and the Chartered Association for the University of Toronto would be Canada.

Chartered Association Advisor. The person who oversees the operations of the Chartered Association. They are the first point of contact for new chapters. You can find your Chartered Association Advisor [HERE](#).

Affiliation. The process in which someone becomes an official and active HOSA member. This must be done using the Conference Management System (CMS). The affiliation deadline for PS/C chapters varies by Chartered Association.

Registration. The process in which an affiliated member can sign up to attend conferences. Deadlines vary based on the conference; be sure to check your chartered association's website as well as [HOSA's](#) for the correct timelines.

Postsecondary Chapter. A HOSA chapter established at a postsecondary institution that offers degrees at less than a baccalaureate level.

Collegiate Chapter. A HOSA chapter established at a four-year institution that offers baccalaureate degrees.

Conference Management System (CMS). HOSA's online system for affiliating members and registration HOSA members for conferences. You can access the CMS [HERE](#). Detailed instructions for using the CMS are [HERE](#).

Getting Started

Two separate processes:

- Affiliate your chapter with International HOSA and your HOSA state association
- Affiliate/register your chapter through your school's new student organization process

Requirements for Affiliation with International HOSA:

- At least five active/affiliated members
- A faculty/staff advisor
- Chapter constitution/bylaws (see [PS/C Resource Page](#) for an example)
- A completed online chapter affiliation application
- Additional chartered association-specific affiliation requirements

Common Requirements to Affiliate with Your School:

- First, find out your school's procedures
 - This process varies by institution, so check your school website
 - Most colleges require the following in order to create a new student organization:
 - A constitution or bylaws
 - A designated faculty/staff advisor
 - A list of members
 - Approval from the student government or another governing body
 - Communication with appropriate school administrators
 - A completed application*
 - A scheduled interview with the school administrators*

*It is possible your school will not require these items.

See the below steps to help you navigate this process:

How to Start a HOSA Chapter: The 7-Step Procedure

- Step 1: Reach out to the Chartered Association Advisor
- Step 2: Become officially recognized by the school's administration
- Step 3: Get a HOSA chapter advisor
- Step 4: Get members to join
- Step 5: Get your charter number
- Step 6: Host your first meeting(s)
- Step 7: Affiliation & Membership Fees

Step 1: Reach Out to Your Chartered Association Advisor

- Before starting a chapter, it is always a good idea to reach out to your Chartered Association's Advisor, as they can help throughout the process. In this step, you will be able to determine specific requirements that your Chartered Association mandates for new chapters.
- Find your Chartered Association's Advisor contact information here: <https://hosa.org/chartered-associations/>
- It is also a good idea to reach out to your State Officers for additional assistance, especially if there is a designated PS/C officer on their team.

Step 2: Become Officially Recognized by the School's Administration

- Notify school administration that you would like to start a HOSA chapter at your school.
- For PS/C institutions, the procedure for getting the chapter recognized by the school is likely more formal and may include a student group application and interview process.

Tip: Your PS/C institution may allow you to start the chapter unofficially and complete certain action items before the student organization application/interview process begins/is completed. Take advantage of this opportunity by bringing students together and gathering everything required to start a chapter (Steps 3-7).

- For the application, the school administration will most likely ask:
 - **What is its purpose?**
 - What HOSA is/offers, why it is important/unique, what HOSA can do for the school community, what you have already done/need to do to get the chapter operational
 - If you have never participated in HOSA before, to gain a better understanding of these questions and more:
 - Reference the [HOSA Handbook Section A](#)
 - Email your State Officers, the PS/C International Executive Council Members, or other HOSA members you know who can provide insight to their experiences in PS/C HOSA.
 - **For the Constitution/Bylaws**
 - If your school has sample bylaws for student organizations, you can use elements from HOSA's and your school's sample bylaws to produce your own.
 - **For an interview** (going over similar questions as in the application)

Once the application and interview process are complete, the committee may take a few days to weeks to deliberate. As previously stated, and if possible, continue to complete the following steps to get the chapter operational.

- **For a presentation to your institution's student government:**
 - You may be required to make a presentation to the student government, convincing them to recognize the chapter.
 - During the presentation, you must be prepared to:
 - Emphasize the uniqueness of HOSA.
 - Explain how HOSA will benefit members.
 - Explain how HOSA will benefit your college community.
 - Explain why this level of affiliation meets your chapter's needs.
 - See 'Resources' for a sample presentation.

Step 3: Get a HOSA Chapter Advisor

- This can be a relatively easy or difficult process
 - Middle/high school teachers may have greater flexibility, time, and availability to be advisors, while PS/C professors or faculty members may be busier or simply uninterested.
- Communicate with professors and administrators in person
 - Professors and/or faculty members may not respond for weeks if emails, for example, are lost in their inbox.

Picking Your Advisor

- The Advisor does not necessarily have to be in the healthcare field or be a science professor, but HOSA is more likely to align with their interests. Extend the search to other faculty/staff members if the initial attempt to recruit a health science-related professor is unsuccessful.
 - It is most important that you pick someone you trust and can rely on.
- For PS/C institutions, there may already be an assigned faculty member who must be your advisor, especially if a specific department is “endorsing/sponsoring” the creation of your chapter.
 - Real example: At Princeton University, ODUS (Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students) sponsored the creation of Princeton HOSA. Within ODUS, the Director of Student Leadership and Engagement was assigned as the student organization's advisor for all ODUS-affiliated organizations that needed an advisor; no other faculty member outside of ODUS could serve an official advisory role for these student organizations.
 - Make sure to contact your sponsoring department and ask if this is the case to prevent weeks of hassle!

- If a specific person is not required to be your advisor, then as previously stated, find any faculty member who is excited, whose interests align with HOSA, and who you believe would serve the best in the role.
- Make a list of health professions or science-related faculty and staff members.
 - Identify and narrow the list to five to seven good choices. E-mail and call these people.
 - Meet potential advisors in person, at office hours, or whenever they are free.
- If you do not know who to ask, reach out either to students who may have a professor in mind or faculty members (current professors/faculty members or advisors) you are in contact with who could connect you with someone they may know.
 - Email format to contact potential advisors:
 - Greeting
 - Introduction
 - Explain how she/he was identified
 - Define what HOSA is
 - Share the requirement to have a chapter advisor
 - Present the request
 - Conclusion

Email example:

“I am (your name) and (your relationship to/how you know this professor). I have an important inquiry for you. I am a member of the (college name) Chapter of HOSA-Future Health Professionals. We are searching for a faculty/staff advisor for our chapter.

Description of HOSA and its benefits: HOSA–Future Health Professionals is an international student-led organization run by and for students interested in pursuing careers in the health profession. Founded in 1976, HOSA has over 4,000 secondary and postsecondary/collegiate chapters in 57 chartered associations with over 290,000 members. HOSA is officially recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. HOSA is 100% health; therefore, HOSA focuses resources on helping students become effective, compassionate health professionals and leaders in their chosen field of work. The unique benefits of HOSA include leadership opportunities at the local, state, and international levels, volunteer and community service opportunities, scholarships, and state and international leadership conferences. These conferences offer students the opportunity to attend educational symposiums, compete in 96 (and counting) different competitive and recognition events, and network with HOSA’s nearly 100 profit and non-profit business and health industry partners. All professional-level schools of health professions prefer applicants who demonstrate leadership skills, actual experience with health-related

community service, and academic achievement. HOSA membership provides students with all of these key opportunities.

Faculty/Staff Advisor requirement and time commitment: The HOSA Bylaws require each chapter to have a faculty/staff advisor to affiliate with the state and international associations. The time commitment is guided by how much you want to be involved in our chapter's activities. You may forward any paperwork you receive from International HOSA or (your chartered association) HOSA to our president, who will follow up on the correspondence and simply keep you informed. Although the advisor of our chapter would be encouraged to attend state and international conferences, this, again, is not required. I understand you have many responsibilities. However, we are hoping—as you see the value of our chapter on our campus and realize that the time commitment is minimal—you would consider lending your support as our advisor.

Thank you for considering our request. Would it be possible for us to arrange a time to discuss this opportunity? I can be reached at (your phone number) or (your email address).

Sincerely,
Your Name, Your Position”

- Make it easy for the advisor.
 - Arrange for the chapter to pay the advisor’s affiliation fee.
 - Commit to having the chapter officers complete paperwork, fill out the online affiliation, and handle fees.
 - Show appreciation: have the chapter buy him/her a HOSA-related gift or gift card.

A Note on Advisor Involvement:

- For PS/C institutions, your advisor will likely have little to no involvement in the student organization’s activities and operations. This leaves it up to you and your chapter officers to understand these different responsibilities and stay on top of deadlines such as:
 - Collecting membership fees for affiliation.
 - Membership fees are due 30 days from the date of the invoice being generated by HOSA Headquarters.
 - Collecting conference registration fees.
 - Utilizing the HOSA online Conference Management System (CMS) to register and pay for members' affiliation and conference registration fees.
 - **Tip:** Collect money before registering each member! HOSA does not delete registrations once the affiliation is submitted. If you hit

“finish,” your chapter’s registration is officially submitted, and there are no deletions except for duplications.

- Coordinating travel to conferences.
- Planning/executing chapter council and general membership meetings/communications.
- Coordinating additional on-campus activities/events.
- Maintaining constant communication with your Chartered Association Advisor will help make this process much smoother.

Step 4: Get Members to Join

- Ask friends who may be interested in joining and professors/faculty members to help spread the word.
- Take advantage of school announcements, student group fairs, and other modes of communication such as group chats, social media, and emails to inform people about your new HOSA chapter.
- Host a booth at the Student Organization Fair:
 - Have a simple trifold on HOSA
 - Have the ILC promo YouTube video playing on a loop in the background
 - Have handouts including a QR code to scan to fill out an interest form to garner interest
 - Immediately after the activities fair, create an email listserv to send out mass communication.
 - Consider starting a chapter social media account.
 - Reach out to potential members and welcome them to the organization.
- Potential pitch besides a general explanation of HOSA:
 - “HOSA is unique- it is the pipeline for young students, like us, to healthcare. The innumerable opportunities it provides for development as a student and leader with varying levels of interest in healthcare are truly remarkable. From conferences and events to scholarships, industry connections, networking, and leadership development opportunities, there is something for every member to enjoy and learn about. Ask any member to describe the feeling of being surrounded by over 12,000 people at our annual International Leadership Conference, and you’ll find that HOSA is more than a student organization; it is a community filled with electrifying energy that spans our 290,000+ members worldwide. If you have any interest in healthcare, HOSA is 100% the place to be.”
- For students unsure of the time commitment--especially PS/C students:
 - “Members can get as much as they would like from the organization, making it as low or high commitment of a student organization as possible. Members can exclusively compete in events if their free time permits, or they can take advantage of all the leadership, service, networking, and professional development opportunities HOSA offers to take full advantage of the HOSA experience.”

- Create a process on how members will be elected/chosen to be chapter officers
 - Example chapter officer positions include President, Vice President, Treasurer, Director of Public Relations, Volunteer Coordinator, Shadowing Director, Social Coordinator, and Competitions Director

Step 5: Get Your Charter Number

- To be recognized as an official HOSA chapter, you will need your HOSA charter number and password for the HOSA Conference Management System (CMS)
 - This website is used to affiliate members with HOSA, register members for conferences, and pay both affiliation and conference registration fees. (See step 7)
 - This is found on the hosa.org website by clicking “Login” on the top right.
- Getting your charter number is a quick process that can be completed by contacting your Chartered Association/State Advisor. Refer to Step 1 for how to find their contact information.
 - Your charter number is the login ID for the CMS; it is also necessary to keep it handy for other HOSA forms members must fill out, such as medical release forms. This information is very important, so write it down and keep it safe.

If you are starting a collegiate chapter, it is likely that you will be reaching out to HOSA Headquarters alone, managing the [HOSA CMS](#) for your chapter, and providing updates to your advisor (as listed above in Step 2)

Step 6: Host Your First Meeting(s)

- Ideas to attract people to your first meeting:
 - Send an extra email/other social media message the day before and/or the day of the meeting with the meeting agenda.
 - Post flyers around campus with the meeting time, date, and location.
 - Offer free food (i.e., pizza, chips), if possible.
- Create an agenda-- Explain to the prospective members what HOSA is and all the unique opportunities HOSA offers.
 - Include levels of the organization, conferences, competitive events, HOSA’s service projects, scholarships, additional opportunities, etc.
 - Explain the general structure of your chapter, such as membership requirements if you choose to implement.
 - Get the members involved—ask what events they want to see.
- Meeting Room Reservation Policies
 - Some colleges/universities do not allow organizations on campus to reserve meeting rooms until they are affiliated with the student

government/official organizations. Find out if there are rooms you can use for your first few planning meetings that do not need to be reserved.

Step 7: Affiliation & Membership Fees

- Make sure to have all necessary forms and membership fees **before** you or your advisor register members on the [HOSA CMS](#). This is essential because once a student is affiliated, you cannot remove them.
 - Collect forms and fees at meetings or via virtual application.
 - Determine if app-based money transfers (Venmo, CashApp, Zelle) are allowed on your campus to collect fees.
 - *Real Example:* The ODUS department at Princeton provides a link that Princeton HOSA members can click on and pay affiliation or conference registration fees virtually using a credit card.
 - The payment goes directly to the official Princeton HOSA student group account to pay HOSA later.
 - Remember that your advisor must also pay affiliation fees.
 - Grant Funding: Reference the PS/C Resource page on the HOSA website for Grant Funding throughout the year.
- Now that you have affiliated members, you or your advisor can register the members as official HOSA members and register them for conferences.
- Detailed instructions on how to use the CMS to affiliate and register are also on the [PS/C Resource page](#) on the HOSA website.
- **Important dates:** Affiliation for PS/C Chapters differs from Chartered Association to Chartered Association. Membership fees are due to International HOSA 30 days after registration. It is imperative to read the directions on the HOSA Chapter Affiliation Application prior to submission.

Payment

- For **current year membership/affiliation fees** only, you can mail a check to HOSA or electronically pay with a credit card on the CMS.
 - There is an additional 4% fee for each credit card transaction.
 - HOSA is located at:
 - HOSA-Future Health Professionals**
 - 548 Silicon Drive, Suite 101
 - Southlake, TX 76092
- All **conference registration fees** go through the Chartered Association office, *not* International HOSA. Please refer to your Chartered Association's website or staff on how to pay.
 - Each invoice generated from the CMS shows the correct remittance address at the top of the invoice. Be sure to check this to ensure that your payments get to the correct place in a timely manner.

- In the case of **past due membership/affiliation fees**:
 - For credit card transactions, call HOSA at (800) 321-4672 to pay over the phone, as these are not accessible in the CMS. There is still a 4% fee for each credit card transaction.
 - For mailed checks: Send to HOSA at:

HOSA-Future Health Professionals
548 Silicon Drive, Suite 101
Southlake, TX 76092
- For HOSA portal and payment questions, please contact Hope Antrim at hope.antrim@hosa.org
- Get an understanding of your school's financial processes to determine what payment method would work best - do this as early as possible in the first semester.

Once you have completed all these steps, you will have successfully created a new HOSA-Future Health Professionals Postsecondary/Collegiate Chapter! Congrats!

How to get students' attention?

- What are pre-health college students interested in?
 - Some students may not be willing to spend time or money necessary to study for competitions or attend the HOSA State or International Leadership Conferences. Once you learn your members' specific interests, you may find some are indeed interested in the SLC (State Leadership Conference) and/or ILC (International Leadership Conference). You can then target your in-depth discussions about conferences and competitions exclusively to those who have expressed an interest.
 - In order to explain to students how HOSA is unique, you must know what other campus organizations do or do not offer.
 - Consider looking at other pre-health organizations on campus and attending some of their interest meetings. Think about what they offer to their members, and what you can apply to your HOSA chapter.
- What will attract members?
 - Competition: HOSA is the only PS/C organization to offer health science competitions on the international level.
 - Volunteer Recognition: See the Barbara James Service Award under '[Recognition Events](#).'
 - HOSA Partnerships: HOSA partners with [NMDP](#), the Medical Reserve Corps, and more to provide members with a chance to give back.

- Community Service Opportunities: Host local events to give your members a chance to serve their community.
- Leadership Opportunities: Encourage and foster chapter officer roles and committees.
- Scholarships: Check out the scholarships available to your members [HERE](#).
- [Career Center](#) & [Internships](#): HOSA provides exclusive professional opportunities for members.
- [Alumni](#) Network: With over 3 million alumni members, HOSA is a great way to network.

Final Thoughts

Remember always to let your passion for HOSA shine through!

The opportunities HOSA offers members are always increasing. Keep yourself up to date by regularly visiting the HOSA website (www.hosa.org) and following HOSA on Instagram (@hosafhp).

For additional resources, visit the [PS/C Resource Landing Page](#) and the [Chapter Advisor Resource Guide](#).

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