A Roadmap for ASA Chapter Rejuvenation

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Has it been more than a year since your chapter last met? Are you having difficulty finding new officers and/or involving early-career statisticians? Does your chapter need rejuvenation? This article provides guidance we hope will help you attain the status of a healthy ASA Chapter.

First, let’s talk about the following minimal requirements for an ASA chapter to be in good standing:

- Maintain a current constitution on file at the ASA office
- Elect officers according to your chapter constitution
  - Ensure the president, secretary, treasurer, and chapter representative are ASA members
  - Report names and addresses of chapter officers (especially the president, secretary, treasurer, and chapter representative) to the ASA office on an annual basis
- Hold at least one chapter meeting per calendar year
- Complete the annual report of chapter activities requested by the Council of Chapters Governing Board

If you cannot locate your chapter constitution, contact ASA Professional Development and Chapter and Sections Manager Rick Peterson at the ASA office to see if he has it on file. For questions about officer elections, contact Director of Awards, Committees, and Elections Elizabeth Henry.

Last, the recently revamped annual chapter reporting tool should only take about 15 minutes to complete.

Benefits of a Chapter

Benefits of being a healthy chapter include the following:

- Community – Get together (in person or virtually) and make new contacts.
- Service – Give back by mentoring and supporting young statisticians.
- Continuing education – Stay on top of emerging statistical technologies.
- Networking and job support – Ask if anyone knows about any jobs in the area for statisticians.
**Officers Wanted**
To engage or recruit new officers, we suggest the following:

- Send an email to the chapter membership list and local organizations that employ statisticians to see if anyone is interested
- With the following suggestions, encourage someone you know to step up as a volunteer officer:
  - Start by acknowledging their strengths and skills.
  - Talk about the benefits of being a volunteer officer (e.g., developing leadership skills, networking opportunities, enhancing your CV, and the chance to make a difference in the organization).
  - Provide specific details about the responsibilities and time commitment for each officer position (as consistent with the chapter’s constitution). Help people see that being an officer will not take up much of their time.
  - Address any concerns and help them feel confident in their decision to step up.
  - Let the person know they will not be alone in their new role and offer support and training to help them develop the skills they need to be successful.
  - Highlight the impact of their contribution (positive impact on the chapter).
  - Share success stories of other volunteers.

**A Timeline for Becoming a Healthy Chapter**
Once the minimum requirements are in reach or met and a small group is formed, a planning meeting can be held. It’s important to not to do too much too quickly. Having one chapter planning meeting and one well-done fun chapter event during the year is sufficient if that is all you can manage. Start out simply. Here is an example timeline for becoming a healthy chapter:

**Fall (or any time):** Conduct a planning meeting with chapter officers.
- Are elections needed this year?
- Look at the *Chapter Chatter* newsletter or the August 2021 *Amstat News* article, “‘How-To’ Succeed Now and in the Post-Pandemic Future,” for chapter activity ideas. Also, consider hosting an ASA traveling course. Here are a few other ideas for successful activities:
  - Host a social gathering before a business meeting.
  - Organize a panel discussion about jobs or careers.
  - Invite speakers such as someone from ASA leadership to talk about a general topic of interest, an author of a recent impactful journal article to talk about the article and current research, and a colleague from work who is known for being a great speaker to talk about how they use statistics in their field.

**January:** Turn in your annual report (the Council of Chapters will send out instructions) and submit a request for a traveling course, if interested.

**February:** Apply for stimulus funds for a planned event.

**March:** Nominate a member for a Chapter Service Award.
**Budget**

Request stimulus funds from the ASA. Up to $1,000 can be requested throughout the year if the annual report has been submitted by January 31. Stimulus funds can be used for items such as pizza for a social gathering; the funds do not need to be spent on a speaker honorarium.

**Help Wanted: Early-Career Statisticians and Students**

Last, we suggest contacting local universities and organizations that employ statisticians to see if they would like to help the chapter in any way, particularly by encouraging their students or early-career statisticians to participate in the chapter rejuvenation process. Also, consider establishing a mentoring program as a chapter activity by following these steps:

- Identify mentors.
- Send an email describing the mentoring program to local organizations that employ statisticians.
- Match mentors with mentees.
- Invite the pairs to chapter activities.

These are just a few ways to move toward providing a sense of community for your chapter members, providing service to the community, offering continuing education to learn about new statistical methods and tools, and facilitating networking and job support.

Finally, don’t miss *Chapter Chatter* for the latest news and upcoming chapter events. If you have news about your chapter you would like to appear in *Chapter Chatter*, submit your article.

For assistance, contact the ASA district vice-chair for your district or the ASA office. Additional chapter information and resources can be found on the Council of Chapters website.