

How-To Guide: Creating Community Service Committees for Pre dental Clubs

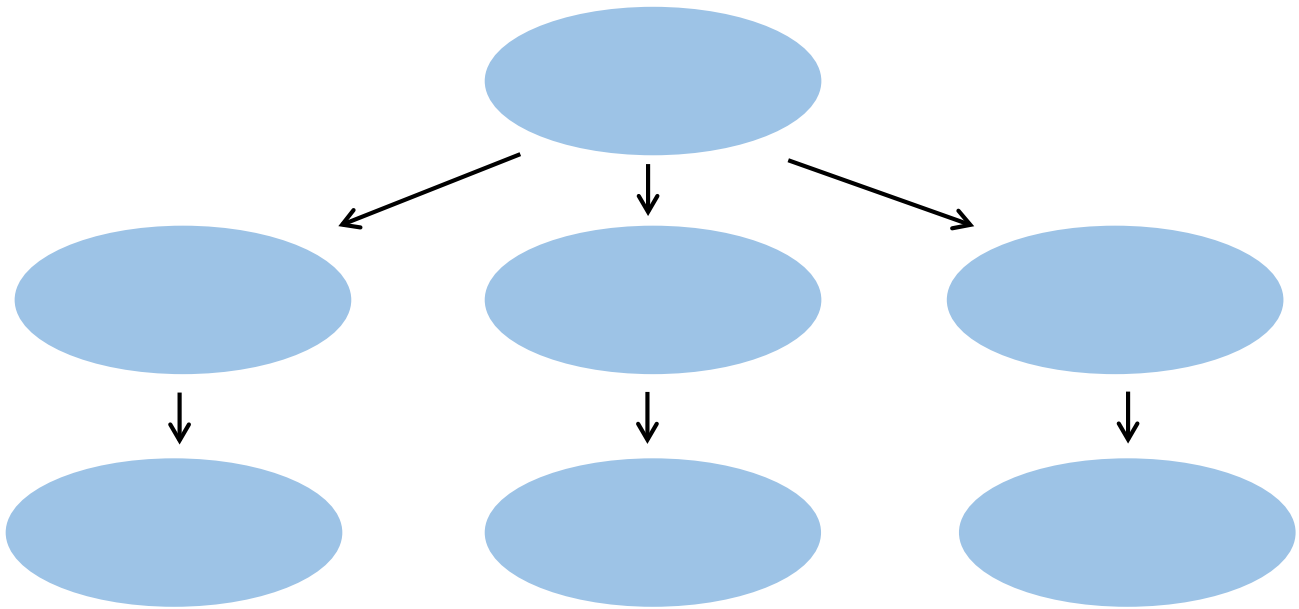


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Introduction

Developing community service committees is a great way to create new leadership opportunities within your pre dental club while providing volunteer experience to members and improving your community. This guide provides an example of a proven leadership style and is split into two sections: a guide for community service officers and a guide for committee chairs. The committee chairs are responsible for leading the committees, planning events and working directly with committee members. The officers oversee the actions of the committee chairs and make sure the committees and individual projects are successful as a whole. See the figure below for the organizational structure.



Community Service Officers

The community service officers are in charge of organizing and overseeing the community service committees. This includes selecting committee chairs, assigning general members to each committee, scheduling committee chair meetings, approving committee budget requests and distributing and analyzing surveys. These students collaborate with the executive board in order to keep the president and other leaders up to date on the committees' actions. Assign two or three students to take on the role of community service officer, depending on the size of your club and number of committees. Officers are encouraged to attend as many committee meetings and events as they can.

Community Service Committee Chairs

The committee chairs interact directly with their committee members. They schedule committee meetings, plan committee events and are responsible for communicating with other board members to get the budget and events approved. Committee chairs also announce committee updates at the pre dental club meetings and update their committee members via social media and emails.

Guide for Community Service Officers

To-Do List for Community Service Officers

- 1) Decide which committees to create.
- 2) Select committee chairs.
- 3) Assign members to committees.
- 4) Schedule committee chair meetings throughout the year.
- 5) Approve committee budgets throughout the year.
- 6) Send out surveys at the end of the year.
- 7) Report annual results of community service committees.

Decide Which Committees to Create

The first thing you will want to consider is how many committees your club will have. Usually, one committee for approximately twenty active members works well. Remember that not every committee member will be able to make it to every meeting or event and some members may not participate in the committee at all.

Once you have decided how many committees to form, you will have to determine what the committees will raise awareness and funds for. While deciding on committee goals, make sure to consider the following:

- 1) Are there specific programs or charities that your club already works with?
- 2) Do you want both dental and non-dental related committees?
- 3) Are there any specific community needs your club could address?
- 4) Can you partner with another student club, ASDA chapter or dental organization on a program or issue?

You can find examples of common community service committees in Appendix 1.

Select Committee Chairs

As officers, you can select the committee chairs on your own or open the decision-making process to the entire executive board. Selecting two chairs for each committee works well because they are able to assist each other throughout the year, but there are not too many chairs trying to coordinate schedules and ideas. While deciding who will be appointed as chair, consider each applicant's year in school, years in the club and his or her previous involvement and dedication to the club.

An example of a committee chair application can be found in Appendix 2. Out of courtesy, be sure to notify all applicants after receiving their complete application and of their application status after chair decisions have been made. Example appointment and declination email templates can be found in Appendix 3.

Assign Members to Committees

Give a summary of each committee at your club's first meeting of the school year. Have all members send an email to the officers with their top three committee choices by a certain date. Having the committee chair applications also due on this date may help simplify the process for your members.

Once the preidental members have submitted their committee preferences, try your best to assign everyone to their first or second choice committee. Send an email to all members regarding committee placement. See an example email in Appendix 3.

Schedule Committee Chair Meetings

You can decide how often you meet with the committee chairs. Preidental clubs that currently use this leadership style have found that it works well to meet approximately once a month to discuss the progress of each committee. Be sure to ask committee chairs what has been going well and what has been difficult.

You may want to schedule meetings using polls to determine when most people are available. Doodle.com is a commonly used website to coordinate schedules via polling.

Remember to send meeting minutes to all committee chairs in a follow up email within three days of the meeting (preferably later that night). This may seem like a strict suggestion, but minutes are much easier to remember and write up immediately after the meeting. Make sure the minutes are detailed enough so anyone who reads them can feel like they were there.

Approve Committee Budgets

You will need to collaborate with your president and treasurer to approve committee budget requests. Together, you can decide on a budget for each committee. Remember that all committees are not the same and some may need more money for their events than others. An example of the Budget Approval Form can be found in Appendix 5.

Send Out Surveys

It is important to send out surveys to all committee members so you and your committee chairs can learn what has been going well and what can be improved. Sending out a survey at the end of each semester will help you determine what to change as the school year continues. You can chose to do a handwritten survey at the end of a meeting or you can create an online survey. SurveyMonkey.com is a well-known, free option that is easy to use. You can even make the survey anonymous to ensure members can openly provide suggestions. You can find an example survey in Appendix 6.

Distribute the survey results to all committee chairs and review them during a committee meeting. It is beneficial to organize data based on individual committees, as well as the club as a whole.

Report Annual Results

Reporting the impact of your initiatives is an important step in showing the benefit of providing service. It also provides an opportunity for reflection, assessment and improvement of your projects. Have committee chairs type up an annual summary of their committee's progress, metrics and challenges. Utilize your comprehensive meeting minutes to aid in this process. Share the report with your pre dental club members. You can even use these reports to help you in obtaining funding from your university, non-profit organizations and other sources of funding.

Guide for Community Service Committee Chairs

To-Do List for Community Service Committee Chairs

- 1) Create a group for your committee on social media (Facebook).
- 2) Gather contact information for all committee members.
- 3) Schedule committee meetings throughout the year.
- 4) Plan committee events throughout the year.
- 5) Get your budget approved before each event.

Create a Facebook Group for your Committee

Today more than ever, students and professionals alike rely on social media to stay up to date on certain topics. Creating a Facebook group is one of the easiest ways to provide committee information to all members. Utilize this resource to post about upcoming meetings and events as well as brainstorming and event promotion. As the year comes to an end, you may want to consider keeping the Facebook group active so next year's committee can use it also.

Gather Committee Members' Contact Information

Do your best to gather contact information from the club's records. If you are having trouble finding contact information, check your school's student directory or collect the information at the next committee meeting. It is a good idea to communicate updates through multiple ways including social media and email.

Schedule Committee Meetings

You and your co-chair can decide how often your committee should meet. Meeting once a month allows members to be included in event planning, while not being overwhelmed by a large time commitment. Consider scheduling meetings using polls to determine when most people are available. Doodle.com is a commonly used website to use for such polling.

Remember to send meeting minutes to all members and the community service officers in a follow up email within three days of the meeting (preferably later that night). You also may want to post them to the committee's Facebook group. Make sure the minutes are detailed enough so anyone who reads them can feel like they were there.

Plan Committee Events

Committee chairs are responsible for developing and planning events to raise awareness and funds. With the help and input from committee members, determine what, where, when and how you can raise the most awareness and funds for your committee's charity.

The scope of a committee can vary from planning one large event, such as a university-wide oral health awareness day, to developing an ongoing program, such as creating an educational awareness partnership with local schools.

Get your Budget Approved

You will need to collaborate with your community service officers, president and treasurer to approve committee budget requests. Be sure to track every expense and give feedback on how much is used and needed for the committee's projects. An example of the Budget Approval Form can be found in Appendix 5.

Appendix 1: Examples of Common Service Committees

Educational Outreach Committee

The main goal of this committee is to educate the community about oral health.

- Go to elementary schools to discuss the importance of oral health and teaching students how to properly brush and floss.
- Distribute oral health facts/flyers and free oral health supplies (toothbrushes and tooth paste) on campus.
- See the Oral Health Education Guide online for additional project ideas

Community/Campus Outreach Committee

The main goal of this committee is to host and participate in volunteer events on campus.

- Host campus clean-up events.
- Attend charity events for other student organizations.

Operation Smile Committee

The main goal of this committee is to raise awareness and money for the international organization Operation Smile (www.operationismile.org).

- Send out personalized letter to dentists, dental schools and other dental contacts asking them to donate.
- Host fundraisers such as bake sales, restaurant events, etc.
- Plan a large event on campus to raise awareness.

Clinic Volunteering Committee

The main goal of this committee is to organize and connect members to clinics in need of volunteers.

- Volunteer at local free or reduced-fee dental clinics, even on a regular basis (i.e. five members will volunteer on a certain day at a certain time).
- Don't limit the committee to dental clinics; many medical and other health services clinics could use volunteers.
- Contact or check the website of your state health department or other oral public health organization for a list of clinics that could be options.

Mission of Mercy Committee

The main goal of this committee is to inform the public of oral health disparities in your area and provide information on the Mission of Mercy events your state puts on.

- Hand out informational fliers on oral health disparities and distribute oral health supplies such as toothbrushes and toothpaste on campus or at a community center.
- Hold fundraisers to benefit your state's Mission of Mercy event.
- Organize a group of students to volunteer at your state's Mission of Mercy.
- Advertise the Mission of Mercy event (or other free clinics) in your area.

Appendix 2: Example of a Volunteer Committee Chair Application

Volunteer Chair Application

Please submit application via email to _____ by _____.

Committee chairs will be responsible for scheduling committee meetings approximately once a month and planning all events. In addition, all committee chairs will meet with the volunteer officers approximately once a month to discuss committee progress.

Name:

Email address:

Year in school:

Number of years active in the club:

What committees are you interested in leading?

(1 – Most interested, 4 – Least interested)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Please answer all of the following questions in one page or less.

- Why do you want a position as committee chair?
- How are you a qualified candidate?
- What ideas do you have for the pre-dental club's community service committees?

Appendix 3: Examples of Committee Appointment, Declination and Assignment Letters

Example of a Committee Chair Appointment Letter

Dear Timmy Predental,

Congratulations! You've been selected to be the co-chair of the Educational Outreach Committee for the upcoming school year. Your co-chair is Suzie Predental. Please respond to this email as soon as possible to accept this position. We are extremely excited to start working with you and are confident that this is going to be a great semester!!

We have attached an outline for the first committee meeting on Monday at 7:00 p.m. Feel free to take a look at it so you have an idea of how to conduct the first meeting.

Sincerely,

Community Service Officers

Example of a Committee Chair Declination Letter

Dear George Predental,

Thank you for submitting an application to serve as a Committee Chair. We had an extremely large pool of qualified applicants, and we decided to choose mostly upperclassmen who have been active members of Predental Club. We apologize, but we cannot offer you a committee chair position at this time. We encourage your leadership within your committee. Be sure to keep maintaining an active membership and we look forward to seeing you at future Predental Club events.

Sincerely,

Community Service Officers

Example of a General Member Committee Assignment Email

Dear Molly Predental,

You have been assigned to the Educational Outreach Committee! Your chairs are Timmy Predental and Suzie Predental. Please add yourself to the committee Facebook group at www.facebook.com/_____. Your chairs will be using the Facebook group, along with email, to do most of the communicating. Look out for any updates and future meeting details from your committee chairs.

We are very excited to see what this year has in store. Thanks again for your participation!

Sincerely,

Community Service Officers

Appendix 4: Example of Committee Chair Meeting Agenda

Committee Chair Meeting

Monday, October 1st 20XX

5:00 pm, Student Union Room 123

- 1. Committee Updates:**
 - a. Educational Outreach Committee**

 - b. Operation Smile Committee**

 - c. Community Outreach Committee**

 - d. Ronald McDonald Committee**

- 2. Encourage all members to join their committee's Facebook group.**

- 3. Even if members weren't at last week's meeting make sure they are added to the Facebook group AND email them! Use the student directory to find contact information for all committee members.**

- 4. Committees should try to hold at least one event and one meeting per month.**

- 5. Send minutes to Community Service Officers and all of your committee members. Send meeting meetings to officer Gmail within 3 days of the meeting being held.**

- 6. Each general member meeting, the committee chairs will go to the front and announce any announcements you have/give any updates! Send power point info to volunteer chairs at least 24 hours before each meeting.**

- 7. Committee Budgets → budget for first event needs to be in by the end of the month. The sooner you get it done though the sooner you'll have your money!!**

Appendix 5: Example of Budget Approval Form

Budget Approval Form

NOTE: Budget Approval Forms are not used for reimbursement amounts. They are used to give the officers an idea of the event and the committee's estimated expenses. To get reimbursed, you must send a copy of your receipt to the Predental Club email and the treasurer will send you a check.

Committee Name:

Event Date:

Description of Event:

Itemized Costs:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Total Cost of Event:

Appendix 6: Example of End of Semester Survey

Predental Club Community Service Survey

What was your role in the club's service activities?

What did you like about your experience?

What would you have changed about your experience?

What would be the 'next step' for expansion and improvement for the activities you participated in?

Any additional comments?