

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About ACDA Student Chapters

“What is an ACDA Student Chapter?”

Student chapters have been established for colleges and universities by the American Choral Directors Association to provide opportunities for future choral directors to be directly involved with their professional choral organization while in college. The National Chair of Youth and Student Activities recognize them as members of the Repertoire & Standards Committee of ACDA, and they receive guidance and encouragement from the Division and State Chairs of Y&SA.

“What are some of the benefits of a chapter to a choral program?”

It depends on your goals and individual situation. Many feel that a student chapter provides an incentive for students to become more committed to the art of choral conducting at an early age in the important formative years as they prepare to graduate. A chapter provides learning opportunities outside the classroom and beyond the usually limited time available in choral conducting and methods courses. It can also provide useful services to the choral area and music department, and it encourages student leadership and direct experience with “peer-motivated” discovery of the choral art; conducting, repertoire, preparing for a job, etc.

“Does a student ‘join’ an ACDA student chapter?”

No. It is not another organization to join, per se! Students join the national organization of the American Choral Directors Association as student members (\$35 per year national dues); as members they receive the *Choral Journal* and the *Student Times* (ACDA’s student news-journal) and enjoy the benefits of ACDA membership. A student chapter encourages choral students to be more directly involved with the ACDA on campus.

“How much ‘organization’ is involved with a student chapter?”

As much or as little as you wish. A successful chapter is one where the students determine how they want to function, guided by their faculty advisor (usually the choral director). The key is how the chapter directly relates to the choral program in providing encouragement and opportunities for the student outside the choral rehearsal and classroom. This is one reason why an ACDA student chapter does not “compete” with other

organizations already established in the music program. In a very real sense, it affords benefits no other organization in the department can give. A chapter provides practical experience and promotes confidence in the choral student within the scope of the choral program.

“Are meetings involved and does it take extra time?”

“Yes” and “No” to both parts of the question! Some chapters schedule events in connection with scheduled rehearsals (the day after a concert, for instance); some have formal or informal meetings of their own! A review of activities shows that many functions of an ACDA student chapter are integrated with the total planning and function of the choral program such as sponsoring a high school coral festival; assist director in recruitment, choral events, and planning choir tours; and organize small ensembles to perform for community/campus groups. Unique to each student chapter are the individual ideas including informal “forums” bringing students and faculty or guest clinicians together; establishment of a choral scholarship fund; student conductor concerts; incentive for students to attend State, Division, and National ACDA Conventions as a group; provide assistance to choral directors in the area and visit rehearsals; critique vocal students in a pre-competition event; host social events, et.

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES ARE ENDLESS!