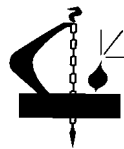


AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Student Unit Handbook



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ABOUT THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES (AAFCS)

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) is one of the oldest professional societies in the United States. Founded in 1909, its purpose is to bring people together to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

AAFCS is the only national organization representing family and consumer sciences professionals across practice areas and content specializations. The Association's 8,000 members work to empower individuals, strengthen families, and enable communities.

These professionals develop, integrate, and provide practical knowledge about life skills—financial literacy; child care and parenting; conflict resolution; consumer education; housing and environment; apparel and textiles; and dietetics and nutrition—that every individual needs everyday to make sound decisions that contribute to a healthy, productive, and more fulfilling life.

Family and consumer sciences offers so many opportunities! FCS professionals work in a wide variety of settings: business, industry, agencies, educational settings, organizations, and as entrepreneurs. The jobs/careers pursued by family and consumer sciences graduates are exciting and varied: teachers, university professors, counselors, family life educators, child care center directors, community outreach administrators, dietitians, consumer advocates, and product developers. Regardless of their focus of study or their career choice, all family and consumer sciences share a core knowledge about the family, consumers, and their environments, and possess a set of transferable skills that prepare them to be problem-solvers.

ASSOCIATION HISTORY

The nature of the family and consumer sciences profession and the programs of the Association have evolved as a result of changes in resources, family functions, culture, the discovery of new knowledge in the basic disciplines and the application of research.

The concerns initially identified by Ellen H. Richards, founder and first president of the American Home Economics Association, remain at the core of the profession and Association, and indeed have become increasingly important. Richards, a chemist, was the first female graduate and female professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She was concerned with consumer education; nutrition; child protection; industrial safety; public health; career education; women's rights; purity of air, food, and water; and the application of scientific and management principles to the home. Historians credit Richards with originating the concept of ecology as well as with formalizing the profession of home economics.

The idea of student affiliation was proposed in 1912, three years after the Association was formed. Students first affiliated with AHEA in 1923 through home economics clubs at both the high school and college levels. This system of group affiliation remained intact for the next 45 years.

In 1944, after the completion of a several year study of high school programs, plans were initiated to establish the Future Homemakers of America. This ended the direct affiliation of high school students with AHEA. However, the college chapters remained with AHEA until 1968.

At the 1968 Annual Convention in Minneapolis, the Assembly approved a bylaws change ending college club affiliates and allowing students to become individual members of AHEA. The name changed from the College Chapter Section to the Student Member Section. In 1993, the Assembly voted that the name of the Student Member Section be changed to the Preprofessional/Graduate Student Section.

In 1994, the Assembly voted to change the name of the Association from the American Home Economics Association to the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences. The new terminology, family and consumer sciences, better represents the scope and breadth of the profession.

At the 2006 Annual Conference in Charlotte, the Senate approved a bylaws change that reorganized the Preprofessional/Graduate Student Section as the Student Unit.

WHO BELONGS TO AAFCS?

Members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) represent a comprehensive cross-section of the family and consumer sciences profession.

Professional Settings

- **Colleges, Universities, and Research** – administrators, instructors, and researchers
- **Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Education** – elementary, middle and high school teachers, adult educators
- **Extension** – local family and consumer sciences educators, home economists, state specialists, state and federal administrators
- **Human Services** – counselors, social service providers, child care center directors, community outreach program administrators, dietitians, therapists
- **Business** – freelance consultants, industry spokespersons, product development and test kitchen specialists, consumer education directors, consumer relations representatives, entrepreneurs
- **Home and Community** – community volunteers, those who are retired, homemakers, part-time professionals

Professional Areas

- **International** – global issues across cultures worldwide
- **Art and Design** – interior/apparel design, applied arts history, material culture
- **Family Economics and Resource Management** – money and time management; consumer issues, human resource development
- **Family Relations and Human Development** – human sexuality, gerontology, counseling, child care, parenting
- **Nutrition, Health, and Food Management** – food science/safety, product development, nutrition, sanitation, safety, food service management
- **Housing and Environment** – energy consumption, equipment design and usage, housing affordability, public policy
- **Apparel and Textiles** – fashion design/merchandising, textile science/preservation, social and cultural aspects of clothing
- **Education and Technology** – curriculum development, methodology, planning and evaluation
- **Communications** – public/media relations, journalism

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

Vision

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences is recognized as the driving force in bringing people together to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

Mission

The mission of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences is to affect the optimal well-being of families and individuals by:

- empowering members to act on continuing and emerging concerns;
- focusing the expertise of members for action on critical issues;
- assuming leadership among organizations with mutual purposes.

Revised by the Senate of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, June 27, 1995.

CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

These principles are intended to aid members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences individually and collectively in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct. They are guidelines by which a member may determine the propriety of conduct in relationships with clients, with colleagues, with members of allied professions, and with various publics.

A member of the family and consumer sciences profession and of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences shall:

1. Maintain the highest responsible standard of professional performance, upholding confidentiality and acting with intelligence, commitment, and enthusiasm.
2. Fulfill the obligation to continually upgrade and broaden personal professional competence.
3. Share professional competence with colleagues and clients to enlarge and continue development of the profession.
4. Support the objectives of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences and contribute to its development through informed, active participation in its programs.
5. Advance public awareness and understanding of the profession.
6. Maintain a dedication of enhancing individual and family potential as a focus for professional efforts.

Approved by the Assembly of the American Home Economics Association, June 18, 1984.

STANDING RULES

Individual student members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences form the Student Unit of the Association. The Student Unit functions under standing rules prepared by a committee of advisors at a workshop in January 1954 and revised in 1961, 1969, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1986, 1992, 2003, and 2006.

Article I: Name

The name of this unit shall be Student Unit of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS).

Article II: Object

Section 1. The object of this section shall be to provide for and to promote the professional development of undergraduate and graduate students of family and consumer sciences or related subjects who are individual members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences.

Section 2. This unit shall:

- Promote the AAFCS program of work and the unit's plan-of-action.
- Provide the opportunity for developing family and consumer sciences leadership among student members.
- Provide experience to increase mutual understanding among people of all cultures.
- Become familiar with the history and explore the future of family and consumer sciences and AAFCS.
- Provide the opportunity to meet and know people who have attained recognition in the family and consumer sciences profession.
- Explore career opportunities and promote knowledge of the capabilities of family and consumer sciences professionals.
- Develop professional interests, which lead to active membership in the affiliate and national association.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. A Student Unit member shall be a person:

a. who is enrolled full-time in a two-year, four-year, or graduate program of the profession at a regionally accredited college or university in the United States or Canada with a major in one or more of the knowledge-based areas of the profession or one of the specialized division areas.

Section 2. The Student Unit of AAFCS will be formed by all individual student members of the Association. They shall be represented on the board of directors by the chair of the Student Unit, and in the AAFCS Senate by three Student Unit members.

Section 3. Student Unit members shall pay annual dues at the rate of \$60.00, of which 25% is remitted to the affiliate association or as stated in the bylaws.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1. The elected student officers shall consist of a chair, chair-elect, first vice-chair, second vice-chair, secretary, and vice chair of outreach and service.

Section 2. The functions of the officers shall be as follows:

The chair shall:

- Be responsible for the overall planning and leadership of the unit
- Serve as the official voting representative of the Student Unit to the AAFCS board of directors
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS committees at the discretion of the Board of Directors
- Assume responsibility for the Student Unit program of work
- Assume responsibility for the Student Unit Annual Conference program
- Preside at the annual Student Unit meetings
- Appoint unit committees as necessary and act as an ex-officio member of them
- Assist the officers as necessary and oversee the performance of their duties
- Be responsible for an annual report of the unit to the AAFCS board of directors

The chair-elect shall:

- Serve as parliamentarian for all business meetings of the unit to ensure that proper Robert's Rules of Order are being followed.
- Assume responsibility as a regional contact in accordance with the rotation of regional responsibilities as outlined in the Student Unit Handbook.
- Attend the annual leadership workshop for incoming board members.
- Become familiar with the Association and its policies and procedures, the duties of the Student Unit chair, and the responsibilities of a member of the AAFCS board of directors.
- Assist the chair with whatever work and/or projects may be necessary.
- Be responsible for election of Student Unit officers.
- Serve as chair of the Student Unit Nominating Committee.
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS committees at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The first vice-chair shall:

- Submit articles to the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences* (practical publication).
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS committees at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- Serve as editor/liaison of the Student Unit newsletter, *In the Know* (to be published no less than quarterly).
- Coordinate the collection of Student Unit information to be posted on the AAFCS web site. All information that needs to be posted at www.aafcs.org shall be submitted, by members and other national officers, to the first vice-chair, the first vice-chair shall then work with the AAFCS staff member(s) in charge of web site postings in order to properly and efficiently disseminate information. Student Unit information should be reviewed on a regular basis (no less than once a month) and should be updated as needed.

The second vice-chair shall:

- Coordinate the Student Unit Awards application and selection process.
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS Committees at the discretion of the AAFCS Board of Directors.
- Present a report of this officer's activities at the annual section meeting.

The secretary shall:

- Record and keep the minutes of the Student Unit meetings.
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS Committees at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- Be responsible for unit correspondence as necessary.
- Present a report of this officer's activities at the annual unit meeting.
- Be responsible for updating HUGS application forms as needed.
- Be responsible for compiling national Student Unit-related directories.

The vice chair of outreach and service shall:

- Serve as a liaison between undergraduate students, graduate students, and professionals.
- Work to establish active partnerships with related family and consumer sciences organizations. Such as Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE), and others.
- Coordinate the annual Student Unit community service project at Annual Conference.
- Compile and update information on scholarships, fellowships, grants, and poster sessions.
- Serve on appropriate AAFCS Committees at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- Assist the First Vice Chair in compiling information regarding upcoming events, scholarships/fellowships, opportunities, and deadlines to be distributed to Student Unit members, chapters, advisors, and chairs via *In the Know* or updates as needed on the AAFCS website.

All six officers shall:

- Attend and participate in the annual convention of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences during the year of election and the year their office ends.
- Be available to visit local and affiliate sections at the requesting group's expense.
- Serve as a representative to one of the four regions: Pacific, Central, North Atlantic, and Southern. This will be determined on a rotational basis (unless each region is already represented).
- Present a report of officer activities at the annual section meeting.

Section 3. Vacancies in any Student Unit national offices, aside from that of chair, shall be filled at the discretion of the remaining officers after consultation with board and staff liaisons. A vacancy in the office of chair shall, in accordance with AAFCS procedure, be filled by the first vice-chair.

Article V: Elections

Section 1. For purposes of election of officers:

- Each affiliate may present to AAFCS a maximum of two candidates for national office.
- The candidate may select the office in which he or she would like to be nominated.
- The nomination and application forms shall be submitted to the second vice-chair by the specified deadlines in order for national officer candidates to be placed on the slate.

Section 2. To be eligible as a candidate for Student Unit national office a candidate shall be:

- A current undergraduate or graduate student member of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences.
- A person who will be enrolled in college throughout the coming school year.
- A person who will be able to attend the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition the year of election as well as the year of office.
- If elected as chair-elect, the person will attend all necessary AAFCS board of directors meetings in Alexandria, Virginia, and the board of directors meeting(s) held at the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition during their term as chair.
- Officer candidates not elected may seek nomination for office in consecutive years as long as they still meet the candidate requirements.
- A member, nominated by their state affiliate, who has completed an application that was submitted to the national chair-elect by the specified deadline (i.e., no members shall be nominated for candidacy from the floor).
- Former national officers will be allowed to run for candidacy for any office position any year following their election term.

Section 3. The election, composition, and functions of the Student Unit Nominating Committee shall be:

- The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the runners-up to the Student Unit national officers, and any national officers not running for a subsequent term. The chair-elect shall serve as the chair of the Nominating Committee.

- The Student Unit Nominating Committee shall score each candidate's qualifications and select up to two possible candidates for each office. Members of the Nominating Committee will consider the candidate's first and second officer choices.
- Nominating Committee balloting will take place by conference call. The chair-elect will notify officer candidates of their selection in writing.
- Election shall take place via paper or electronic balloting prior to the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition, with one vote per student member.
- Fact sheets on each candidate shall be made available to each student member once nominees have been selected.

Section 4. Installation of officers shall take place at the Student Unit business meeting at the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition. The newly elected officers will serve for one year from the time they are elected to unit office.

Article VI: Meetings

The meetings of the Student Unit shall be held at the time and place of, and shall be part of, the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition.

Article VII: Official Publications

The official publications of the Student Unit shall be the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences* and the Student Unit newsletter, *In the Know*.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section 1. Revisions to the standing rules must be approved by a two-thirds vote of those electors in attendance at the Student Unit business meeting at the AAFCS Annual Conference. Information about proposed changes shall be available to electors at least one month prior to the Annual Conference. Revisions of the standing rules, other than editorial changes, shall be recommended by the Student Unit and then approved by the AAFCS board of directors.

Section 2. An elector is the individual selected to cast a vote, at the annual Student Unit business meeting, on behalf of student members in his/her affiliate. That student must be an AAFCS member in good standing and a member of the state affiliate for which they are voting. Typically, the elector will be the student chair for the affiliate. If that individual is not in attendance or is unable to vote for some other reason, students in

attendance from the affiliate should select an elector prior to the section business meeting. The individual who serves as the elector will register with the AAFCS Student Unit Secretary at the business meeting prior to voting. Currently installed AAFCS Student Unit National Officers may not serve as the elector for their affiliate.

Article IX: Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern this section in all cases to which they are applicable, subject to such rules as have been or may be adopted. (The standing rules of the Student Unit shall be consistent with the bylaws of AAFCS.)

**OFFICIAL STUDENT UNIT STANDING RULES
AMENDMENT FORM**

Name _____

Date _____

Affiliate _____

Membership # _____

Amendment _____ **Section** _____

Amendment as a motion:

Secunder _____

(For Staff Use Only)

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR OFFICERS

This proposed accomplishment list should be helpful for Student Unit officers at the local (campus), affiliate, and national levels.

- Send greetings and information concerning meetings to members and potential members.
- Plan meetings, workshops, and projects (keeping program of work in mind) for the year. Reserve rooms, contact speakers, and notify members of the calendar of events.
- Encourage members to attend and participate in local, affiliate, and national meetings.
- Conduct membership drives.
- Make committee appointments.
- Prepare articles for the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*.
- Check guidelines for election procedures for national and affiliate officers and select candidates.
- Conduct officer elections at appropriate time.
- Plan for installation of officers.
- Send names and addresses of officers to appropriate person at affiliate and to AAFCS headquarters.
- Keep adequate records of activities.
- File annual report with appropriate person/office.
- Read official publications.
- Coordinate plans/programs with the AAFCS affiliate and/or district. Communicate activities with affiliate or local professionals.

OFFICER INSTALLATION

Election to an office in the Association is an honor. The duties of the office should be taken seriously, and an installation procedure makes officers more cognizant of their responsibilities. Some local and affiliate organizations already have a well-defined installation ceremony. For those who do not, this ceremony could serve as a guide.

Outgoing officers and incoming officers should be assembled in their respective groups, facing the audience.

The chair addresses the outgoing officers:

“The outgoing officers have served the unit well. You are about to relinquish the duties of your office to a successor. On behalf of the members of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, I thank you for the diligent manner in which you have conducted the duties of your office. We appreciate the leadership and untiring effort you gave.”

The chair addresses the incoming officers:

“I am about to administer the oath of office to the (names of offices). You have been duly informed of the responsibilities of the office to which you have been elected. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me the oath of office: I, (repeat your name), do solemnly promise to faithfully perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected.”

The chair may present the incoming and/or outgoing officers with an appropriate token.

The method may not be as important as the idea that there is a ceremony to mark the occasion of changing officers. You may want to invite parents and faculty to the ceremony, have a keynote address (perhaps by the Dean), light candles for each officer, and serve snacks afterwards.

CAMPUS STUDENT UNIT

The campus Student Unit was established so that family and consumer sciences majors can contribute fully to the growth and promotion of the profession as they add to their individual development.

College students interested in professional careers in family and consumer sciences can become involved in AAFCS programs and experiences that will provide an opportunity for:

- An introduction to the profession of family and consumer sciences, the development of professional attitudes and competencies, and the application of classroom experiences; and
- Involvement with the program of work adopted by the AAFCS Senate and carried out by the national Student Unit, affiliate Student Unit, and campus Student Unit.

Needs of your campus Student Unit group will vary, depending on the interests and experiences of your members. Some groups may focus on service; others may be more interested in career exploration and professional development. Members and officers may wish to pursue some of the following activities:

- Develop programs and activities to help carry out the AAFCS and the national Student Unit program of work.
- Organize membership campaigns to promote the value of AAFCS student membership.
- Plan community projects.
- Foster participation in affiliate and AAFCS Student Unit activities.
- If possible, plan joint activities with other college Student Unit groups and the affiliate.
- Encourage seniors to become new professional members of AAFCS.
- Establish mentor programs with family and consumer sciences professionals.

AFFILIATE STUDENT UNIT

All members of AAFCS, including student members, are automatically members of their state affiliates. The affiliate Student Unit is composed of all the individual AAFCS student members within that affiliate.

The affiliate Student Unit is led by the affiliate chair, who is a student member of AAFCS and who is elected by the student members of the affiliate. Qualifications of the affiliate Student Unit chair are the same as those for Student Unit national officers (enumerated in Article V, Section 2 [1-4] of the standing rules). Other affiliate Student Unit officers may be elected as the affiliate deems necessary.

The functions of the affiliate Student Unit officers may include:

- Preside over all affiliate Student Unit meetings and workshops
- Appoint unit committees as needed.
- Formulate program of work for the affiliate Student Unit in cooperation with other unit officers and affiliates; base this affiliate program on the national Student Unit's program of work.
- Coordinate student member activities within the affiliate by fostering communications among campus students.
- Give information about and encourage student members to attend affiliate and national workshops and Annual Conferences.
- Secure the cooperation and involvement of campus student members in carrying out affiliate Student Unit projects.
- Develop and carry out a plan for selection of the affiliate's candidate for office in the national Student Unit. (See Standing Rules of AAFCS Student Unit for election procedures.)
- Participate in the student activities on his/her campus.
- Encourage local association and individual members to use and submit articles to the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*.
- Prepare an annual report to be transmitted from the affiliate Student Unit to the national Student Unit officer representing your region.
- Coordinate with affiliate president names of students eligible for HUGS (Help for Undergraduate Students)

- Encourage professionalism through personal actions and conduct.
- Provide an affiliate chair report to the Student Unit chair and AAFCS Student Unit staff liaison.

The affiliate Student Unit chair should have an advisor who is a member of AAFCS. The affiliate Student Unit advisor should assist in promoting and strengthening the student member program, offer guidance to all unit officers, and help them to become acquainted with and to carry out the duties of their offices. The advisor's duties may include:

- Advise the affiliate Student Unit chair in his/her duties.
- Assist in developing and carrying out a plan for the selection of the affiliate's candidate for office in the AAFCS Student Unit national officer election.
- Assist the affiliate Student Unit in keeping local student member associations informed of affiliate and local activities.
- Coordinate and give leadership to advisors of campus Student Unit.
- Encourage attendance at the AAFCS Annual Conference and affiliate meetings.

The affiliate Student Unit should hold a meeting at the time and place of the affiliate annual conference. The unit may have additional meetings and/or workshops at other times during the year.

REGIONAL GROUPING OF AFFILIATES

In order to facilitate communications among Student Unit members, each national Student Unit officer will represent a region according to the following rotation section:

North Atlantic Region

Connecticut
 Delaware
 District of Columbia
 Maine
 Maryland
 Massachusetts
 New Hampshire

New Jersey
 New York
 Pennsylvania
 Rhode Island
 Vermont
 West Virginia

Pacific Region

Alaska
 Arizona
 California
 Colorado
 Hawaii
 Idaho
 Montana

Nevada
 New Mexico
 Oregon
 Utah
 Washington
 Wyoming

Southern Region

Alabama
 Arkansas
 Florida
 Georgia
 Louisiana
 Mississippi
 North Carolina

Oklahoma
 Puerto Rico
 S. Carolina
 Tennessee
 Texas
 Virginia

Central Region

Illinois
 Indiana
 Iowa
 Kansas
 Kentucky
 Michigan
 Minnesota

Missouri
 Nebraska
 North Dakota
 Ohio
 South Dakota
 Wisconsin

Regional Representation	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Central	Chair-elect	Secretary	2 nd Vice-Chair	1 st Vice-Chair
North Atlantic	1 st Vice-Chair	Chair-elect	Secretary	2 nd Vice-Chair
Southern	2 nd Vice-Chair	1 st Vice-Chair	Chair-elect	Secretary
Pacific	Secretary	2 nd Vice-Chair	1 st Vice-Chair	Chair-elect

NATIONAL STUDENT UNIT ELECTIONS

Each year at the AAFCS Annual Conference and Exposition, the Student Unit installs new national officers to serve for the upcoming year. Student Unit elections are held via paper or electronic ballot prior to Annual Conference.

Electors

Each student member, in good standing, is entitled to cast one vote per office.

Guidelines for Candidates

- Biographical information sheets will be made available for student members to view prior to voting.
- A photograph, will be requested of all national officer candidates. It will be available for viewing to help promote student candidacy during the election process.
- For more information, see Article V of the Standing Rules.

Sequence of Activities for National Officer Elections

November	National Officer Nomination/Application forms sent to Student Unit chairs
January	(January 15) Nomination forms due to national chair-elect
February	(February 15) Completed applications due to national chair-elect
March	(March 1) Nominating Committee notifies candidates of slate and sends candidate information to AAFCS.
March	(March 15) Ballot is posted to the AAFCS Web site and Student Unit members are notified by email to begin voting.
April	(April 1) Voting ends April 1 and results are tallied by chair-elect.
April	(April 15) Results sent to AAFCS headquarters for inclusion in the Governance directory.
AAFCS Annual Conference	New officers are installed. All newly elected officers MUST be present.

Schedule may be flexible. Watch for email and information on the Web site (www.aafcs.org). Contact Student Unit national officers or AAFCS headquarters for updates.

Be sure to provide the opportunity for all interested and qualified Student Unit members to be considered for nomination.

Affiliates will determine the procedure, which will work most effectively for selecting their affiliate nominee for national office.

AAFCS SENATE

The Student Unit of AAFCS is guaranteed representation in the AAFCS Senate (the governing body of AAFCS) through three student senators. Students in these positions serve as representatives of all student members and are not part of any affiliate delegation. Two of these positions are elected positions, with the third being the Student Unit chair who serves as a voting member of the board of directors.

Individual affiliates may still include a student member as one of their senators. In this case, the student is a representative of the affiliate.

Policies

- The Student Unit national chair is an official senator.
- The other two senators shall be selected, from volunteers, by the national chair.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Membership in the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) is an essential part of investing in your career. As a member of the Student Unit of AAFCS, you will receive these AAFCS services and opportunities:

- *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*
- Extra-curricular education beyond the classroom
- Cooperative relations with other associations, agencies, and organizations
- Advocacy on public policy issues
- Exposure to current information in your field
- Guidance from professionals for career development
- Networking with peers nationwide
- Opportunities to travel to affiliate and national meetings
- Discounts on orders from the AAFCS Products and Publications Catalog
- National, affiliate, and campus Student Unit activities
- Scholarship opportunities for graduate education
- Fostering a mentor relationship
- Leadership development opportunities
- Access to the AAFCS Web site (www.aafcs.org)
- Publication opportunities

... and more!

AAFCS offers you the challenges and choices of today's diverse family and consumer sciences profession. As a member, you can take action now to expand your knowledge and skills outside of the classroom. Build your leadership capabilities—or expand your college experiences—by participating with your colleagues on campus now!

MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

Students graduate, change majors, transfer to other schools, and become active in other school organizations. New members are continually needed for growth of the Student Unit and of the family and consumer sciences profession as a whole. It is *everyone's* responsibility to find new members!

Think of promoting membership as a three-step process:

1. Finding students in family and consumer sciences and related majors, and encouraging them to become members of the AAFCS Student Unit;
2. Selecting the right approach, one that is appealing and creates interest in your chapter, its people and its projects; and
3. Keeping communication open, informing member prospects about what they need to know in order to join the Association.

Finding Prospects

Student Unit members are drawn from students enrolled in a two- or four-year program with a major in family and consumer sciences or one of its specializations. Set a goal for new student members that is challenging, but also attainable.

Your best resources for identifying prospective new student members are your current student members. At a chapter meeting, have everyone write down prospects' names. People like to be involved in a successful, active operation. Let them know your projects and how they can contribute. People expect benefits. Let prospective members know how membership will help them.

Selecting the Right Approach

It is essential to select the right approach to reach out to prospective members. You need to have some background knowledge about your Student Unit members and what their needs and interests are. It also helps to be aware of what resources are available: your Student Unit national officers; affiliate membership chairs; affiliate officers; and faculty members and advisors.

Here are some membership promotion ideas to get you started:

- Recognize active, committed, involved Student Unit members by establishing an honor roll for outstanding members and giving awards for achievement or participation.

- Have a picnic or dinner to recognize involved students, or an installation ceremony with parents and family and consumer sciences professionals.
- Pair upperclassmen with incoming freshmen in the same major. Have the returning student write the freshman during the summer and bring him/her to the AAFCS Student Unit meetings in the fall.
- Select a theme for your membership drive and set individual and group goals. Recognize those who are instrumental in meeting or exceeding these goals.
- Make personal contacts—this is **the most effective method** of recruiting and retaining members.
- Place student newspaper ads, posters, and announcements on campus.
- Have t-shirts made that represent your Student Unit and wear them to publicize your group and its activities.
- Display photographs of various Student Unit events in a prominent place, such as a student lounge, administrative office, or outside a large lecture room in your family and consumer sciences building.
- Send the chapter president into classes to talk about AAFCS and the Student Unit.
- Develop a slide presentation and/or scrapbook that tells a visual story about family and consumer sciences, AAFCS, and your Student Unit. Show it in classes, orientation meetings—wherever there are prospective members.

Keep Communication Open

Building a relationship with prospective members can mean building a long-term commitment. It is important to stay in touch with new members and prospects, keeping them informed. Extend personal invitations to attend Student Unit functions. Make prospects and members feel welcome and that they belong.

Communicate with new officers who follow your term of office. Pass on your plans and experiences to the next person through a written officers report. This will provide a base from which to build.

Member Services: Facts You Should Know

1. Students should use a permanent or year-round address on the membership application, rather than a school address. To avoid disruption in the delivery of the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, address changes should be submitted to AAFCS headquarters four to six weeks in advance of the actual change.
2. AAFCS headquarters has a toll-free telephone line, 800-424-8080. The office is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. EST. When you call, it is helpful to have your AAFCS membership number ready.
3. Each member of AAFCS automatically receives:
 - Membership card
 - New member information—two weeks after submitting an application for membership a new member receives a membership packet, including information on various member services as well as a copy of the most recent AAFCS publication.
 - *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*—published five times per year, the *Journal* contains peer-reviewed scholarly articles, practical information and innovative solutions, and news and updates from the Association. The *Journal* is a valuable resource in completing classroom assignments, and students are encouraged to submit articles for publication.
4. AAFCS Student Unit membership costs \$60.00 per year (\$70 for Texas members). Looking at this another way, membership costs only \$5.00 a month, \$1.25 a week, or \$.18 a day!

MAKE PUBLIC RELATIONS A PRIORITY

It is important to communicate with others about the family and consumer sciences profession and what you do to improve the well-being and quality of life for families, individuals, and communities. Your Student Unit and its individual members accomplish many things, so why not let everyone know about them? Get credit for what you do and further the family and consumer sciences profession at the same time by utilizing public relations.

Public relations is results-oriented. Through a variety of techniques, positive attitudes can be created and negative ones can be counteracted. With good public relations, you can make good things happen.

Create a Plan

First, decide what your public relations objectives are. Do you want to raise awareness? Want people to attend an event? Recruit more members? Raise money?

Next, determine who your audience is by listing the groups of people who need to hear your message. Perhaps your audience is family and consumer sciences professionals, prospective student members, or the general campus community. Don't forget to always include your current members—they are your best bet to carry your message, because they are ambassadors for your group.

Then, decide which media to contact in order to reach your targeted audience. Some of the best media for your group to use will probably be campus newspapers, radio stations, television, community newspapers, and affiliate newsletters. Use the services of your campus public relations office. Using their network of media contacts can increase the size of the audience receiving your message and they can advise you on what will interest your local media.

What is Newsworthy?

Before you begin your media relations outreach efforts, know what makes news. Keep the following questions in mind as you consider which items are newsworthy.

- *Usefulness*: Is the information educational and useful to the public?
- *Magnitude*: How many people are affected, and how intensely are they affected?
- *Timeliness*: Timely items (hard news) are immediate and must run today. Items that have no time sensitivity (soft news) could run tomorrow, next week, or at the media's discretion. Both are valued.
- *Proximity*: Does it or can it happen here?
- *Human Interest*: Does the news story trigger human emotion?
- *Uniqueness*: Can this news story be described by an adjective ending in "st"? First, biggest, worst, most, longest, and hardest are examples.

- *Flexible Format*: Is this information significantly flexible to allow the media to choose its own method of producing it? (For example, audio tape, videotape, photo story, or interview.)

There is probably much about your Student Unit that is newsworthy. The broader the interest of your news, the better the chances are of getting reported. Things you can do to broaden the interest of your news include:

- Tying it in with a topic that has wide appeal (for example, a well-known guest speaker, or a current area of interest to the media).
- Relating local/national/international news to your event.

Media Relations Tools

The form used to “tell your story” in the media varies. One of the simplest is the press release. Press releases can relay your story to the media in a format that is quick and easy for them to use. Many smaller and local papers will extract information from well-written press releases with minimal editing.

Tips for writing a press release:

- Your release should be no more than two pages. A single page is best. Always double space.
- Think things through. Be clear about what you want to say—examine your logic.
- Write in short, concise sentences. Look twice at sentences that are too long. Use simple, clear, and familiar words.
- Paragraphs should be no more than three or four lines long, if possible.
- Be objective. Facts speak loudest; emotional outbursts undermine the messages.
- Make sure your release has a contact person and phone number where reporters may call for additional information.
- Proofread the release carefully before it is sent. Check grammar, spelling, and layout.

More tools and information are provided in the **PR/Media Tool Kit** at <http://www.aafcs.org/resources/mediatoolkit.html>. To access the tools, enter “memberbenefit” (username) and “value” (password).

PUBLIC POLICY

In order to carry out their responsibilities, public officials want, welcome, and need the advice and assistance that sincere and well-informed persons provide. Who better to provide this knowledge than the professionals in family and consumer sciences?

Why get involved in public policy?

Family and consumer sciences is an evolving needs-based profession which continuously responds to its changing constituency. Members of the profession have the expertise to be exceptional advocates for family-related policies. AAFCS members should be advocates for sound public policies on: health care; welfare; children and youth; the elderly; education; nutrition; food safety; violence prevention; consumerism; housing; the homeless; family resource management; the environment; and other issues that affect the well-being of families, particularly those families who are most vulnerable to economic and social risks.

Advocating for sound public policies provides significant and challenging opportunities for independent action and collective collaboration. An effective public policy program is based on the deep conviction that the work of every member of the team is integral to the well-being of the association and those it serves. Few achievements are more satisfying to individual members, or as good for the morale of an organization, as a solid legislative victory that contributes to the organization's mission and objectives.

Writing to Your Legislators

It is important for your elected representatives to hear what is important to you. When writing to your legislator, discuss your leadership role through AAFCS, and cite specific examples of effective programs within your chapter that focus on critical social and economic problems. Most important, thank your member of Congress for his/her support of families. If your Student Unit plans a special event (such as a dinner), invite your local legislator to attend and to speak on subjects of mutual interest.

A sample letter is not included here, because letters are most effective when constituents write to their elected representatives in their own words. Your letter should be concise, informed, and polite. Some specific tips:

1. Try to stick to one typewritten page, two pages at the most.
2. In the first paragraph, state your purpose. Stick with one subject or issue. Support your position with the rest of the letter.
3. If the purpose of your letter is a specific bill, cite it by name and number.

4. Be factual and support your position with information about how legislation is likely to affect you and others. Avoid emotional philosophical arguments.
5. If you believe legislation is wrong and should be opposed, say so. Indicate the likely adverse effects, and suggest a better approach.
6. Be sure your name and return address are legible.
7. The suggested address style is:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator _____

Dear Representative _____

For more tools and information, visit the **AAFCS Public Policy Toolkit** at www.aafcs.org/publicpolicytools.html.

PROGRAM PLANNING

The process of planning programs may at first seem like a long and difficult task. However, it can be made simple when it is broken down into five steps.

1. Brainstorm for Ideas

- Involve members as much as possible during brainstorming.
- Establish ground rules: brainstorming is a time for listing all ideas, not for discussing the pro's and con's (that comes later).
- During brainstorming, allow plenty of time for members to express their ideas.
- Write all ideas on a chalkboard, or somewhere that all participants can see.

2. Prioritize Ideas

- Narrow the group discussion to focus on the top ideas.
- You may want to conduct a ballot, or have small group discussions to determine which ideas have the most potential.
- Use information from this step to set specific goals.

3. Plan Calendar of Events

- Establish where and when the event(s) will be, and determine who is responsible for each event.
- Contact speakers, if necessary.
- Reserve rooms
- Publish and distribute list of activities for members.

4. Pursue Projects

- Involve as many members as possible.
- Follow "Effective Meeting/Program Management" checklist (see page 36).

5. Evaluation

- Ask program participants to complete a brief evaluation after the program, with questions on what they liked, didn't like, and would like to see the next time.
- Remember to bring extra pens for participants to use, and leave plenty of room for comments.
- Collect the responses as people leave the room.

Program Ideas

- Sponsor a brown bag lunch or coffee and doughnuts with local professionals. Invite members to come, talk, and learn more about a particular field.

- Focus on the diversity of the family and consumer sciences profession.
- Have a family and consumer sciences week. Include a career fair, dinner involving family and consumer sciences professionals, and special public announcements on campus and local radio stations. Ask the governor to proclaim family and consumer sciences week for the entire affiliate.
- Sponsor a get-acquainted picnic, ice cream social, or similar event for faculty and students.
- Set up Student Unit exchange programs with other schools or campus organizations. Exchange program reports, membership promotion ideas, and resources.
- Sponsor an event for children.
- Have members visit their high schools to promote family and consumer sciences.
- Follow a theme throughout a semester or year.
- Host a fall luncheon to introduce the department and AAFCS to new students.
- Support the affiliate scholarship fund.
- Have an alumni recognition activity.
- Have a joint event with local AAFCS professional sections.
- Sponsor a fundraising event to help offset Student Unit dues.
- Learn about a specific family agency. Include them in your meeting program as well as your service projects.
- Invite faculty to view a media presentation on a family issue. Spend time after the presentation discussing the topic and its impact on society.

MENTOR PROGRAM

A mentor program can help your Student Unit promote and encourage membership, and can assist students in actively exploring family and consumer sciences careers. Mentor programs provide an avenue for communication between students and professionals, which will serve to strengthen both the Association and the profession.

A common question from students concerning membership in AAFCS is “What can AAFCS do for me?” One benefit that AAFCS provides for students is an introduction into the profession. Professionals can generate enthusiasm in the students for their particular career. The ultimate objective of this experience is to develop in the student a commitment to the profession and the association.

Suggestion for Implementation

1. Arrange for someone to serve as project coordinator. This project can be carried out at the affiliate, regional, or local level Student Unit. Individuals who may serve as coordinators include Student Unit affiliate chairs, affiliate membership chairs, regional advisors, local Student Unit advisors, as well as other interested, responsible and committed members.
2. Distribute questionnaires to interested individuals. From these questionnaires, you can obtain information needed to identify and match up participants.

Questionnaire for professionals: The questionnaire can be sent out by the project coordinator or included in an issue of the affiliate newsletter. The interested professional provides information on his/her career, how to be contacted, and their geographic location. Questionnaires should be returned to the project coordinator.

Questionnaire for students: The questionnaire can be mailed or distributed to students on campus. Students interested in communicating with a professional provide information on their areas of career interest and geographic location. Questionnaires should be returned to the project coordinator.

3. When all questionnaires are returned, the coordinator will match a student and a professional according to career interests, geographic location, and other relevant information. The student and professional are responsible for making contact through letters, phone calls, or visits. It is up to the professional and the student to custom tailor the experience to their lifestyles and time schedules.

Related Activities

Extend invitations from students to professionals, and vice versa, to attend all meetings.

Compile a reference list of professionals and their areas of expertise to be available as a resource for students interested in exploring careers

Conduct a career fair as a Student Unit activity. Set up interesting and eye-catching booths and tables representing a host of different career opportunities for the family and consumer sciences professional. This will help to attract nonmembers to join AAFCS. Job placement centers on campus may have helpful suggestions and may even want to participate.

Devote the theme of an entire meeting to a particular professional career. Invite a professional from that area as a guest speaker or organize a panel discussion concerning that particular career.

EFFECTIVE MEETING/PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Who Will Do</u>	<u>Complete</u>
BEFORE MEETING		
AGENDA		
Plan agenda	_____	_____
Plan for member involvement	_____	_____
Contact people on agenda	_____	_____
Locate previous minutes	_____	_____
Gather materials needed	_____	_____
Submit committee reports	_____	_____
PUBLICITY		
Letters of invitation	_____	_____
Personal contacts	_____	_____
Notices	_____	_____
Bulletin board messages	_____	_____
News releases	_____	_____
SPACE AND EQUIPMENT		
Reserve location	_____	_____
Reserve equipment	_____	_____
DURING MEETING		
SPACE		
Monitor room arrangement	_____	_____
Provide extra chairs (if needed)	_____	_____
Be responsible for climate control	_____	_____
EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES		
AV equipment set-up and checked	_____	_____
Extension cords	_____	_____
Microphones	_____	_____
Gavel	_____	_____
Visual aids	_____	_____
Pens/pencils	_____	_____
Masking tape	_____	_____
Newsprint	_____	_____

Activity

Who Will Do

Complete

AT MEETING

Meet, greet, seat members

Greet/seat latecomers

Hand out materials

Operate equipment

Record meeting

Bring and serve refreshments

AFTER MEETING

IMMEDIATELY AFTER MEETING

Collect unused materials

Return equipment

Clean-up

FOLLOW UP

Thank helpers

Analyze evaluations/feedback

Thank speakers

Follow through with commitments

Make plans for next meeting

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