HOW TO
START OR SUSTAIN YOUR CLUB
DURING DISTANCE LEARNING
OVERVIEW

Part 1: How to sustain your club! This section is for all the pre-established clubs looking for advice anywhere from a whole new system to tips and tricks to improve efficiency.

Part 2: How to start a club! This chapter goes over the basics to how to operate a club and options for resources to work with through quarantine.

OBJECTIVE

Student voice is a vital part of school and public communities. Clubs therefore act as a critical and significant mechanism to communicate where student interests and opinions are at. Although quarantine has limited in person contact, it does not mean your club is threatened. OSV is here to help so you can continue or start to spread your members’ voices and keep your club thriving. This guide will go over everything from meeting strategies to resources, so not only does your club stay alive, but continue to grow and improve despite the circumstances!
SCHEDULE, AGENDA, PLAN

Things never fail to be hectic during these unprecedented times, especially when all students are trying to learn a new routine this coming fall. Therefore, to keep members engaged, offer a schedule for when your club’s meetings, related opportunities, and events will occur for the coming month. The more detail inclusive the plan is the more inclusive the member's individual schedule’s will be to the club. Giving the club an agenda also gives members something to look forward to. Including descriptions under events and meetings can also entice members to come and participate.

Organize a shared calendar for members to access events and meetings and email Google Calendar event reminders to add meetings to personal calendars.
MEETINGS

2 PICK A TYPE

Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meets, etc. are among the most popular and accessible.

3 HOW OFTEN MEETINGS OCCUR IS UP TO YOU!

However, consistency is key. Meeting on a regular basis makes it easier for members to remember and is more convenient for existing members to communicate dates to potential new members.
There is nothing like boring silence to dim the energy of a potentially fun meeting. Develop a meeting agenda for each meeting a couple of days beforehand to share with the leaders and/or members. An agenda allows for you to filter through the most valuable items so you aren’t occupying unnecessary amounts of time by being repetitive or trying to remember what to talk about. In addition, a meeting schedule allows you to pack in as much content and fun into your sessions and keep them informative and engaging. By sharing the information with your club’s leaders and/or members, you increase attendance by giving people something to look forward to.

During the in-person school year, your club was most likely loaded with creative activities. Although online school has forced clubs to go virtual, that does not mean the fun activities have to end. Plenty of websites offer online games such as pictionary and popular card games. At the end of meetings, leave time for team bonding, especially if you want to engage new members and keep growing your club.
MEMBERSHIP

6 SOCIAL MEDIA

Online school is continuing, and so should your membership growth! If you haven’t already, create an Instagram page and transfer your members to your followers. In addition, publicize your Instagram to your school to go in their newsletter or on their Instagram to spread the news about your club to the student body.

7 TRACK MEETING NUMBERS

Use a Google Form and translate responses to a shared spreadsheet so members and leaders can view participation and hours to earn chords, credits, etc.

8 NEW MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Host new member meetings regularly to encourage existing members to invite peers and friends. Offer incentives for members who bring the most new people to a meeting. Keep track of new member acquisition and prior member departure in a spreadsheet to set goals for meeting numbers.
COMMUNICATION IS KEY

9. EXCESS IN COMMUNICATION

When there is a lack of in-person contact, there should be an excess in communication. Explore new options to best communicate with your members to have connection through all sources: email, phone, and apps. For email, work on starting a newsletter which highlights events as well as member activity. For phones, explore apps such as Remind Me, Google Classroom, Slack, GroupMe, and Band to keep your club in your member’s notifications. Finally, for apps use an accessible Instagram, Google Classroom, or website to hold the essential information and be the core of operations.

10. COMMUNICATE IN THE SAME FORMAT

Keeping consistency allows your members to immediately recognize a notification from the club so they are sure they won’t skip it. In addition, assign the same pattern of information distribution to the same apps every time so it is easy for a member regardless of new or old to find. For example, a monthly calendar can always be located on Google Classroom and meeting times can be found on RemindMe.

11. LEADERSHIP IS IMPORTANT

Although you might have a set routine of information distribution, members are always bound to have questions. Therefore, specify who the leadership team is and what roles everyone fills. Specifically, focus on their contacts and who to contact with questions. In addition, communication between leaders must be open and frequent. Create a group chat through text, GroupMe, or Slack to make sure everyone is always on the same page and doing their part.
STARTING YOUR CLUB

9
START A LEADERSHIP TEAM

Not only will a leadership team allow you to appear as an advanced club to members, it also gives you other sources to look to for ideas as you start. It also can provide members with a way to get more involved with your club. Begin by creating specific roles: meetings leader, social media manager, secretary, etc, and then fill the positions.

10
YOU NEED MEMBERS

Word of mouth never fails, especially when you are starting with a group of friends. First, look to the broadest resource. For most, that is the school. Utilize their forms of communication through email and social media and contact them for publicity to the student body. In other cases, the school might not be the broadest source. In that case, contact a large, club or local organization with similar interests as your own to publicize your club to their student audience. Secondly, create incentives. Anyone should understand that money is not an option for most clubs; however, making your club a “resume builder” or “networking” opportunity creates intangible incentives that attract new but also seriously interested members.

11
LET’S AVOID THE MAYHEM AT MEETINGS

Establish a specific time and date by creating a poll for the leadership team and club members to fill out. Communicate these times through a shared calendar and platform that everyone can access. It is key to acknowledge the possibility of a technological disparity among members and to be inclusive in communication and operations. Develop a consistent outline to be used for most agendas so members feel meetings are predictable. Introductions are key to establishing connections and making everyone feel comfortable and thus must be mandatory each meeting.
STARTING YOUR CLUB

15. **SET THE BAR HIGH**

Expectations are a way for leadership to stay accountable and give members an idea of your core values. Create a list of expectations, a mission statement (where you are), and a vision statement (where you want to be) among the club together and to be shared at each meeting. Expectations are critical, as they outline the guidelines of acceptable behavior to be involved in the club.

16. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

Not only is Oregon Student Voice an ally to student leadership, but so are many other organizations and clubs. Ask for help and reach out to others openly. Oregon Student Voice will be creating a clubs chat for clubs to communicate and assist one another soon!
By keeping or starting your club, not only do you help yourself, but also your members! Now more than ever, students need signs of normalcy. Finding a way to keep your club going will create a greater impact in the community outside the cause itself. OSV is here to help your endeavors and inspire your advocacy. Check out our Instagram for updates and website for info. Stay empowered!

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