



SIUE Alumni Chapter and Network Handbook

This handbook provides information on alumni chapter/network structure and goals, the requirements for their establishment, and ongoing support from the Alumni Association. Included are resources and more information to support the growth of each chapter and network.

WHAT IS AN ALUMNI CHAPTER?

An Alumni Chapter offers opportunities for alumni in a specific geographic region to connect based on their passion for SIUE. A Chapter is a community of alumni that comes together to celebrate their alma mater wherever they may roam, and act as local advocates for SIUE.

WHAT IS AN ALUMNI NETWORK?

An Alumni Network offers opportunities for alumni of shared interests and common bonds to connect on meaningful levels beyond the traditional regional structure, whether that connection is based on identity, experiences or personal interests. The SIUE Alumni Association fosters opportunities for alumni to connect to the university and each other in ways that address these special interests and common bonds.

WHY CHAPTERS/NETWORKS?

The purpose of Chapters/Networks is to be the foundation for alumni engagement by providing innovative events and opportunities for alumni to connect with the University, the Alumni Association, and with one another.

How Chapters/Networks Support the SIUE Alumni Association's Mission:

- Act as advocates for SIUE
- Facilitate SIUE events and programs focused on increasing involvement within all alumni and for diversified interest groups
- Foster a spirit of camaraderie and sentiment among alumni who reside in common regions and/or share similar interest
- Inspire prospective students and support current students attending SIUE
- To encourage alumni and friends of SIUE to maintain an active relationship with SIUE and fellow Cougars
- To promote alumni participation in the development and advancement of the institution through financial support (student scholarships, academic programs or other University initiatives)
- To serve as ambassadors of the University to their communities

WHAT CHAPTERS/NETWORKS ALREADY EXIST?

There are many opportunities to get involved with already existing Chapters/Networks.

SIUE Alumni Association Chicago Chapter
SIU School of Dental Medicine Alumni Association
SIUE School of Pharmacy Alumni Association
SIUE Springfield Illinois Area Alumni Chapter
SIUE Young Professionals: St. Louis, Alumni Network
SIUE Music Department Alumni Network
SIUE Black Alumni Alliance

INTERESTED IN STARTING A CHAPTER/NETWORK?

Please follow the steps below to request a chapter/network:

1. Contact the Office of Alumni Affairs to state your interest and schedule an initial meeting (in person or via phone).
2. Staff will request a list of alumni based on parameters discussed in the initial meeting. For a regional Chapter, there must be a minimum of 75 emailable alumni in that corresponding region. The Office of Alumni Affairs may send an email blast to the distribution list in order to assess interest in the proposed chapter or network, or to announce the formation of the proposed chapter or network.
3. If there is enough interest or enough participants (minimum of 10 people), the chapter/group leader must submit a **New Chapter/Network Application/Recognition Form**.
4. Upon the approval from the SIUE Alumni Association Board of Directors, the proposed chapter or network request will be granted.

If approved, the application will serve as the group's governing documentation.

Items to be included are:

- Mission/Goals
- Leadership Structure with Succession Plan
- Financial Structure and Policies

Chapter/Network Mission

All alumni chapters and networks must have a written mission statement outlining the purpose for its existence. The mission statement will serve as a guide for future programming and events and inform alumni of the group's direction. **Each chapter/networks purpose must be aligned with the general mission of the SIUE Alumni Association to benefit the alumni community and is subject to review by the Alumni Association.**

Leadership Structure

While it is not required that a chapter or network hold a specific structure (e.g. board of directors, committee, council, etc.), it is highly recommended that all chapters and networks, regardless of size, level of activity, and complexity develop a leadership team or steering committee to ensure that:

- Responsibility for planning and implementation of events and outreach is distributed in manageable portions
- Diversified program planning is developed that is responsive to the variety of interests and needs of targeted alumni
- A set structure will help in sustainability and succession planning

Some key positions may include:

- President/Co-Presidents/Chair/Leader: point person for all major information and serves as liaison between chapter/network and Alumni Association
- Secretary: to maintain notes and meeting minutes
- Communications: for e-mail or social media maintenance
- Treasurer: to manage event and operating funds
- Committee Chairs: to lead specific committees, i.e. Sporting Event Committee

Each chapter/network must identify someone as the liaison between the Alumni Association and the participants of the chapter/network. They will communicate with the Office of Alumni Affairs/Alumni Association as well as organize and lead chapter/network meetings and events. Chapter/network leaders must be SIUE alumni or honorary alumni and serve for a specific term determined by the group. Chapter/network leaders should engage continually in succession planning – identifying, training, and motivating new leaders. Term limits, election or selection cycles, and training can all be included in the group's governing document.

There is no limit to the number of members who can participate in a chapter/network however, there must be a minimum of 10 members in order for a chapter/network to function.

Financial Structure

Financial support for all chapters/networks events/activities shall be self-sustaining. If annual funding is not provided by the Alumni Association, limited funds from the Alumni Association may be available upon request via the funding request form.

Events and all other networking opportunities should be planned on a cost-recovery basis. This means that all expenses (including promotional expenses and follow-up expenses) should be incorporated into the event/activity fee. All monies must be collected by the Office of Alumni Affairs.

There may be alumni within the network who have access to resources to help defray the cost of an event or provide a meeting facility at no cost (e.g. a club membership, conference room at their place of business, etc.). These resources should be explored and utilized whenever possible. Contributors should be obtained in time to permit appropriate recognition. The Office of Alumni Affairs must be notified of contributions and foundation policies need to be followed if the donor would like to receive gift-in-kind credit.

Chapters/networks shall not collect dues from their participants.

Reimbursement/Payment Criteria: Funds spent by a chapter or network for an event/meeting must be approved by the Office of Alumni Affairs in advance, prior to expenditure. In order to be reimbursed, receipt(s) for expenditure(s) must be submitted

to the Office of Alumni Affairs within 14 days of the event. Please note that only tax-exempt, itemized bills may be reimbursed. There are limited funds within the Office of Alumni Affairs to cover these expenses. Contact the Office of Alumni Affairs for more information and/or to request funds.

Chapter/Network Engagement Activities

Each chapter/network is an extension of the SIUE Alumni Association and provides a key role in engaging in meaningful connections between SIUE alumni and the University. Powerful engagement includes, but is not limited to, social events, philanthropic activities, discussions via social media/email communication or quarterly meetings. These activities should parallel the mission and vision of the SIUE Alumni Association which is to Engage, Educate and Empower Cougars for Life.

Engagement Opportunities to Consider

We encourage you to plan engagement opportunities that you think would be of interest to your group's members. Here are some events to consider:

- Sporting events
- Community service projects
- Book clubs
- After-work happy hours or networking socials
- Dinners at local restaurants
- Gatherings featuring faculty speakers
- Celebrations for new SIUE students from your city
- Celebrations for new graduates moving to your city
- Entrepreneurial/Start Up discussions via Social Media/Email
- Educational events
- Mentorship within your chapter or network
- Professional and Career Readiness Seminars

(Please keep family-friendly events in mind so that as many alumni as possible can participate.)

Events

Prior to scheduling any event, the chapter/network leader should contact the Office of Alumni Affairs to coordinate the proposed date with other alumni activities and submit an **Event Proposal Form**. All events shall be held in a manner consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the SIUE Alumni Association and the University. Events must be submitted to the Office of Alumni Affairs twelve weeks in advance. After each event you will submit an **Event Summary Form** along with photos of the event to the Office of Alumni Affairs within one week of the event. This process does not need to be completed for other engagement opportunities such as meetings, discussions, etc.

Annual Engagement Review

The SIUE Alumni Association and its Board of Directors will annually review each Chapter/Network to determine the level of engagement and may provide additional guidelines to ensure that each Chapter/Network is advancing the mission of the SIUE Alumni Association to Engage, Educate and Empower Cougars for Life.

ALUMNI CHAPTER/NETWORK REQUIREMENTS

All chapters/networks must do the following

- Host a minimum of two events/meetings/activities per year
- Use official logos on any materials distributed within the chapter or network
- If requesting funding, submit Funding Request form a minimum of 60 days prior to event.
- Submit an **Event Proposal Form** a minimum of 60 days prior to an event and indicate if an **Event Kit** (marketing materials) is needed from the Office of Alumni Affairs
- Have event registration handled by Office of Alumni Affairs
- Submit an **Event Summary Form** along with photos of the event to the Office of Alumni Affairs within one week of the event
- Add chapter/network events and meetings to your corresponding Facebook page
- Proactively maintain phone and email contact with the Office of Alumni Affairs
- Stay up to date with SIUE by reading regular emails and newsletters
- Promote the SIUE Alumni Association social media platforms
- Submit a **Year-End Report** every fiscal year, due June 30

CHAPTERS/NETWORKS CAN EXPECT THE FOLLOWING FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION/OFFICE OF ALUMNI AFFAIRS

The Office of Alumni Affairs and Alumni Association will partner with you to offer support, advice and guidance for your outreach efforts. You can expect assistance with the following:

- Marketing and Communications support
 - Website presence
 - Social media
 - Coordinate creation and management of social media pages as a means to actively encourage social, geographic, and professional alumni networks. Before creating a presence for your chapter/network online, please work with your Alumni Affairs liaison to ensure that there is not a duplicative group already established and to acquire any additional information to set up your network up properly.
- Event coordination support
 - Program coordination (guest speakers etc.)
 - Registration platform
 - Promotion (web, calendar, newsletters, social media, mass emails, magazine etc.)
 - Contract/payments submission
 - Provide an event kit that will include: nametags, giveaways, brochures and signage
 - Post-event survey and follow up

The SIUE Alumni Association retains the authority to discontinue or not formally recognize alumni affinity groups. Reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) the actions of an existing or emerging alumni chapter/groups are deemed to be detrimental to the University, its students or other alumni or 2) the existing or emerging alumni chapter/networks are not in alignment with the Office of Alumni Affairs or SIUE Alumni Association priorities. SIUE Fraternities and Sororities are ineligible to become recognized Affinity Groups.