

SPEA START-UP KIT

An Official Guide to Starting Your Own SPEA Chapter



CONTENT

Benefits of SPEA | 2

History of SPEA | 2

Mission & Objectives Statement | 3

How to Get Started | 3

List of Meeting Ideas | 5

Important Documents:

Sample Constitution | 6

Sample By-laws | 7



WELCOME

A Letter from the National Leadership Team

Dear Student Representative,

Thank you for your interest in starting a chapter of the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association (SPEA) at your dental school. We are delighted to welcome you into a nationwide community focused on promoting ethics and professionalism in the field of dentistry.

The interest of students like you is imperative, signifying that future dental professionals deeply care about ethics and professional standards. By joining SPEA, you are becoming part of a widespread network of individuals influencing the culture of our profession. SPEA is fortunate to be partnered with the American College of Dentists in this shared mission. As SPEA expands, the goal is to unite the community, share perspectives in an open and unbiased forum, and appreciate the diversity of experiences present in the area of dental ethics.

SPEA is a student-initiated and student-run organization. However, we suggest forming lines of communication between the student body and faculty, staff, and administration as well. In addition, as leaders of professionalism and ethics at your school, we encourage your participation at the national level of SPEA. This will create great opportunities for networking and building lifelong friendships.

This start-up kit includes ideas, advice, and suggestions to facilitate the formation of your chapter. Keep in mind that your Regent and the national Executive Board will be happy to help you along the way. We look forward to welcoming you to the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association.

BENEFITS OF SPEA

The benefits of establishing a local SPEA chapter

- Participate in a student-driven national organization dedicated to increasing professional and ethical behavior among students within the field of dentistry
- Play a part in the creation of a unified voice of students regarding ethics and professional issues
- Gain access to a collective body of students that can give you guidance and mentorship regarding ethics issues specific to your school
- Aid in the development of ethical and professional behavior
- Promote dental ethics and professionalism through:
 - Informative lectures
 - Informal discourse
 - Guest speakers
 - Special events and projects
 - Local, regional, and national meetings
- Promote lifelong thought and action in the area of dental ethics that will accompany students throughout their professional careers
- Increase awareness of ethical dilemmas facing other chapters and get a chance to support fellow dental professionals beyond your own school
- Foster an environment where ethics and professionalism can be openly addressed without bias or judgment
- Increase pride and professionalism among students of dentistry
- ***Make ethics fun and interesting!***

HISTORY OF SPEA

Officially established as SPEA in October 2011

In March 2007, a small group of students at the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC met with Dr. Alvin Rosenblum, professor of dental ethics, to discuss how they could become more proactive in promoting ethics at their school. What ensued was the first of several brainstorming sessions on what would eventually become the Student Professionalism and Ethics Club (SPEC). The first SPEC event open to students, faculty and staff was held in October, with an attendance of over a hundred.

Shortly after, SPEC began work on a start-up kit with the goal of aiding other schools in establishing local SPEC chapters. The group was recognized nationally and has received support from the American Student Dental Association (ASDA), American College of Dentists (ACD), and American Society of Dental Ethics. ASDA passed a resolution encouraging the establishment of organizations like SPEC at every dental school.

In May 2010, a steering committee of ten dental students from across the country, with the guidance of faculty, met at the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry to lay out the strategic plan for forming a new national organization. SPEC was renamed as the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association in Dentistry (SPEA).

SPEA, with the support of the ACD, embarked on expanding its reach and invited student representatives from dental schools across the nation to meet at the ACD Annual Session. In October 2011, representatives from various dental schools collaborated and discussed the future path of the organization. The by-laws were ratified, and SPEA became a new national organization.

This truly has been an exciting time in the development of dental ethics at the level of education. SPEA believes the momentum we now see taking place will help to lay a foundation of ethics that will build the framework for integrity among dental professionals. As one of our local chapters, we welcome you into our organization and look forward to your contributions!

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

The **Student Professionalism and Ethics Association in Dentistry** is a national, student-driven association that was established to promote and support students' lifelong commitment to ethical behavior in order to benefit the patients they serve and to further the dental profession.

The objectives of the Association are:

Act as a support system for students in strengthening their personal and professional ethics values by:

1. Providing a resource for ethics education and professional development
2. Fostering a non-punitive, open-forum environment for ethics communication
3. Promoting awareness of ethics standards and related issues within dentistry

Collaborating with leadership of the dental profession to effectively advocate for our members

HOW TO GET STARTED

Starting a SPEA local chapter is a very rewarding experience. However, there is a great deal of work involved. The national leadership is here to offer you guidance, support and advice. This kit includes a number of documents that will be helpful in starting a local chapter.

Gathering Information:

A SPEA local chapter is required to agree to uphold the SPEA Mission and Objectives. It is encouraged to tailor your chapter to address the specific needs of your school.

- What is your school already doing in the realm of ethics and professionalism?
- Does your school hold ethics classes?
- Is there an ethics committee/board that hears claims of violations and administers consequences?
- Does your school have a code of ethics?
- Do students take an oath?
- Which faculty are members of or hold offices in ethics organizations, teach ethics, or have a background in ethics?
- What is the ethics atmosphere of your school and what are the ethics needs?
- What is the general level of knowledge in your school of dental ethics?
- What is the general attitude of students and faculty about ethics and professionalism?
- Are there specific ethics violations that are more common and why might these violations be taking place?
- Are there clear guidelines in your school outlining what ethical and professional behavior is expected?

Drafting of Documents:

Constitution and by-laws are essential for any organization. A sample can be found on page 6. Your school may have specific requirements that your chapter's constitution and by-laws must follow. You may use the provided sample as a guide to help draft your chapter's constitution and by-laws.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Starting a SPEA local chapter is a very rewarding experience. However, there is a great deal of work involved. The national leadership is here to offer you guidance, support and advice. This kit includes a number of documents that will be helpful in starting a local chapter.

Registration of Your New Organization with Your Dental School:

Inquire what it takes to become a recognized organization at your school. Gather the necessary documents to register your organization with your university. Your university should provide that information, usually in a manual. Likely, you will be required to draft a constitution and by-laws. As mentioned before, a sample is found on page 6. Be prepared to attend meetings, revise documents as needed, and remember that SPEA National will support and guide you through the process.

Finding an Advisor:

Find a faculty member, such as an ethics professor or fellow of the American College of Dentists, who would like to be an advisor to your organization.

Recognition of Your Chapter by SPEA National:

While each SPEA chapter is independent and autonomous with a common goal, becoming a recognized SPEA local chapter allows you to take full advantage of our resources, such as the use of SPEA logos and identity, speakers, activity ideas, SPEA events, and other membership benefits.

To receive recognition, submit the following information to your Regent:

(Your specific Regent contact info can be found on our website, www.speadental.org)

- The SPEA Mission and Objectives Statement signed by organization founders and faculty advisor
- List of SPEA Local Chapter Officers and Faculty Advisors, including name and contact information
- Copy of Constitution and By-laws that was/will be submitted to your school
- Confirmation of organization registration at your dental school

Invitation to Membership:

Once a recognized local SPEA Chapter is formed, a call-out or invitation to potential future members should follow. As a nonexclusive, student-run organization, SPEA membership is open to all students, faculty, staff and alumnae, but only dental students may become voting members and hold leadership positions at the national level.

Planning Events:

You may pick a regular day and time to hold meetings and if possible set up a schedule ahead for the term/semester. Monthly general meetings work well. A second monthly 'planner's meeting' or 'board meeting' held the week before will be beneficial.

- Compile a list of meeting themes/topics of interest to your members and relevant to your school. A good list of ideas will help you plan future meetings and enable you to give notice to speakers you would like to invite.
- Publicize the meeting with plenty of notice via email and flyers around school. Invite faculty and administration, as generally they love to see what you are doing and can provide a knowledgeable voice when questions arise.
- If you need help planning or promoting your first event, please contact your Regent. We can help you with designing flyers, event planning, and finding funding.
- We would love to see what your organization is up to, so make sure to take pictures at your meetings and send them in to speadental@gmail.com

Communicate with SPEA National:

Throughout the year, keep your Regent updated with local chapter news. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the national team with any questions. We look forward to seeing you at SPEA Annual Session, which takes place each year in October!

MEETING IDEAS

A list of potential meeting ideas to get your chapter started. Visit the national SPEA website for more resources, including Meetings In a Box which provide further details and sample documents for specific meeting topics.

Introductory Meeting

- Information on how SPEA started and what it is now
- Introduce chapter officers and advisor
- Outline of planned events for the semester
- Membership sign up

Guest Speakers - leaders from the school, community, or the local ACD section

- Invite an American College of Dentists Fellow to present on his/her involvement with organized dentistry and the ACD
- Have a speaker come and talk about the decision making process that our minds go through and incorporate how to make ethical decisions
- Invite faculty and ACD fellows to join your meetings
- Encourage them to share certain situations they've come across that relate to the particular topic of discussion
- Invite professors to present sample case scenarios

Panel Discussions

- Create a panel of students and/or dentists to facilitate a discussion on current ethics issues at your school
- Encourage students in the audience to ask questions
- Come up with some open ended questions for discussion

Case Presentations

- Pick a topic of interest (e.g. licensure, dental students doing dentistry during mission trips to other countries, ethics in dental school, etc.), prepare a quick and informational presentation on it, and then open the floor for discussion
- Ask members what topics or questions they are interested in learning about

Dental Debates

- Ask students to present 'Ethical Dilemma' Cases
- Have an open forum debate
- Let anyone ask questions of the whole room
- Moderate the back and forth discussion and have a backup questions prepared

Small Group Breakouts

- Have each group assigned to an ethical value (e.g. veracity, justice, etc.)
- Put together a case and have each group discuss how their value is related or can be applied to the case
- Can break up into small groups to discuss sample ethical scenarios that can be found on our SPEA and the ACD website

Visit www.speadental.org and communicate with the National SPEA team for more creative ideas and resources!

SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

Sample Constitution for the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association at [Insert School Name Here]

ARTICLE I. NAME

The official name for this organization shall be the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association in Dentistry. This organization will use the name or its acronym, [Insert School Acronym Here] SPEA, in all publicity materials and correspondence.

ARTICLE II. MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The Student Professionalism and Ethics Association in Dentistry is a national, student-driven association that was established to promote and support students' lifelong commitment to ethical behavior in order to benefit the patients they serve and to further the dental profession.

The objectives of the Association are:

Act as a support system for students in strengthening their personal and professional ethics values by:

1. Providing a resource for ethics education and professional development
2. Fostering a non-punitive, open-forum environment for ethics communication
3. Promoting awareness of ethics standards and related issues within dentistry

Collaborating with leadership of the dental profession to effectively advocate for our members

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

All currently enrolled dental students are eligible to be full, voting members and hold leadership positions. All other dental hygiene, post-doctoral, advanced standing program for international dentists, and specialty program students as well as school staff, faculty, alumni, and alumnae are eligible to be non-voting, affiliate members. All members are required to demonstrate support for the mission and objectives of this organization. Membership decisions will not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion or creed, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

- President
- Vice President
- Immediate Past President [optional]
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Member At Large [optional]
- Membership Coordinator [optional]
- Class Representative

ARTICLE V. AFFILIATIONS

- This organization is a recognized student organization at [school name], but is not part of the University itself.
- In all correspondence and business transactions, it may refer to itself as an organization at [school name], but not as part of [school name] itself.
- SPEA accepts full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors.
- SPEA agrees to abide by all pertinent [school name] policies and regulations. Where [school name] policies and regulations and those of SPEA differ, the policies and regulations of [school name] will take precedence.
- This organization recognizes and understands that the University assumes no legal liability for the actions of the organization, and that the University is not providing blanket indemnification insurance coverage for any activities of the organization, unless those activities expressly benefit and further the goals of the University, and have received prior review, approval, and consent of Campus Activities, Risk Management, and/or General Counsel.
- This local chapter recognizes that the national organization, the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association (SPEA), can assume no legal liability for the actions of the local chapter and that the national organization is not providing blanket indemnification insurance coverage for any activities of the organization, unless those activities are expressly and specifically sponsored by the national leadership, which must include formal written authorization from SPEA's National Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI. FACULTY/STAFF ADVISOR

As a recognized student organization at [school name], SPEA is required to have an official advisor from the [school name] faculty and/or staff. Other persons may serve as special advisors as needed.

ARTICLE VII. BY-LAWS AND AMENDMENTS

This constitution should be in accordance with, and is subject to, the official national organization by-laws. By-laws can be amended or added to this constitution by a two-thirds vote of the SPEA membership.

SAMPLE BY-LAWS

Sample By-laws for the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association at [Insert School Name Here]

A. PURPOSE

- The purpose of this organization is to increase the overall level of ethics and professionalism at [school name]. By uniting the community of students, faculty, and staff of [school name], SPEA will promote lifelong thought and action in the area of dental ethics. Through various programs, activities and associations, SPEA aims to foster an environment where ethical and professional behavior issues can be addressed in an open, unbiased forum.
- SPEA aims to further the ethics education of every student at [school name] and help achieve the development of ethical and professional behavior in the educational setting that will accompany the students throughout their professional careers. SPEA also aims to form a student-centered committee to mediate and resolve concerns relative to professional behavior.

B. MEMBERSHIP

- An individual will be considered an active member in good standing by meeting the Chapter's standard of attendance and by signing the Chapter Charter in pledge of support for the SPEA Mission and its ideals.
- In order to retain active member in good standing status, attendance of at least one meeting per semester/trimester is required.
- All members are eligible to attend all general meetings and events of this organization.
- If a fee is charged to attend a particular event, the membership may establish a fee scale for members and other attendees as appropriate.

C. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- The President will chair all meetings of SPEA and will call special meetings as needed. The President will be a member of the Executive Board.
- The Vice President will chair all meetings of SPEA in the absence of the President, will be responsible for obtaining committee reports before each general meeting, and will serve as the Local Chapter Liaison. The Vice President will be a member of the Executive Board.
- The Immediate Past President will serve as advisor to the Executive Board and officers. She/he will guide the President and other officers in fulfilling their duties and help them while transitioning into their respective roles. The Immediate Past President will be a member of the Executive Board and will serve as the liaison to the local Section of the American College of Dentists.
- The Secretary will take, record, and file meeting minutes and attendance and will approve all official correspondence for the organization. The Secretary will be a member of the Executive Board.
- The Treasurer will maintain financial records, report on the financial transactions of SPEA to the Executive Board, and author an annual budget. The Treasurer will be a member of the Executive Board.
- The Member at Large is a standing officer and will serve as chair of the professional standards council.
- The Membership Coordinator is a standing officer and will be responsible for recruitment initiatives and maintenance of a current membership database.

D. REQUIREMENTS FOR RUNNING FOR AND HOLDING OFFICE

- All officers and candidates for office must be currently enrolled [school name] students in good academic standing and with no history of ethics sanctions.

E. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- Nominations may be submitted to the President anytime during the period of the week before—and up until 24 hours prior to—the election meeting for inclusion on the ballot. Additionally, write-in nominations will be accepted during the meeting itself if given to the President anytime before the last call, which immediately precedes chapter elections.
- Any members may nominate any other member, including him or herself.
- Elections will be held at the first general SPEA meeting of the summer trimester or via electronic ballot around that time period.
- A simple majority vote of voting members present (quorum met) at that meeting will be sufficient to elect an officer. If there are more than two candidates and no candidate receives a majority, there will be a run-off vote between the top two vote recipients in the general meeting.

SAMPLE BY-LAWS

Sample By-laws for the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association at [Insert School Name Here]

F. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

- Officers may be removed from office for failure to perform duties, violation of the membership clause, failure to remain in good academic standing, or if sanctioned for an ethics violation.
- Officers to be voted upon in this regard will be notified of the intention to do so in writing or by electronic means at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken. A two-thirds majority of the Board membership present at a scheduled Board meeting shall be required for removal from office.

G. TERMS OF OFFICE AND VACANCIES

- The term of office of the Board will be July 1 through June 30.
- Should a vacancy in office occur, the Board will appoint a SPEA member to fill this position. If the President's position becomes vacant the Vice President will assume the duties of the President for the remainder of their term and the Board will appoint a SPEA member as Vice President.

H. MEETINGS

- General meetings will be held as scheduled. Twenty-five percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business at any general meeting.
- Special meetings of the Association may be petitioned to the President at any time by twenty-five percent of voting members.
- The Board will have regularly scheduled meetings. A quorum for any board meeting is defined as twenty-five percent of the board.
- Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the President or petitioned to the President by twenty-five percent of the Board members. Notice of special meetings must be communicated to all Board members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.
- The Executive Committee of the Board shall consist of the President, President Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, Immediate Past President. The quorum of the executive committee shall be three members.

I. GENERAL COMMITTEE POLICIES

- Committees may be created by a majority vote of the Board.
- All decisions of any committee involving organization funds will require the approval of the majority of the Board.
- All committee chairs are responsible for submitting committee reports to the President prior to each board meeting.
- Committee chairs are appointed by the Executive Committee and can form subcommittees as needed.

J. FACULTY/ STAFF ADVISOR

- The Executive Board must select the faculty advisor each year.
- The advisor must sign the recognition application each year, whenever officer information changes, or when amendments are made to the constitution.
- An advisor may not vote in SPEA matters, hold office or unduly influence decisions of the student organization.