



American University *of* Armenia

The Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development

Tool Kit

For Establishing
Regional Alumni Clubs

Created by the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development

The mission of the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development is to develop, coordinate and promote programs for our alumni to keep them connected and involved with the AUA and one another. Create a culture of philanthropy by encouraging alumni to contribute their time, talent, and resources to the advancement of the University.

The Career Development function of the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development is to contribute to career achievements of AUA graduates through enhancing their job finding skills. Additionally, to provide job placement services to students/alumni and develop strong and tangible links between employers and the university, to allow for the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development to support and assist students and alumni in their professional development.

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Table of Contents

Welcome

Role and Purpose of Clubs

Club Leadership

Successful Alumni Clubs

Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development Support

Starting and Running an Alumni Club

Event Planning Timeline/Checklist

Club Event Information Form

Club Event Advice

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

Welcome

Dear AUA Alumni Club Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in working with us to establish an AUA Alumni Club in your area. Your role as a volunteer with your local alumni club is an important one. Without your passion, dedication, vision and hard work, AUA Alumni Club events would not happen.

We value the work of volunteers like you on the local level who assure success of the club. You are an integral part of the success of your alma mater.

With that in mind, all of us in the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development will support you as you form your Alumni Club. We have designed this manual to offer answers, ideas, and support to you as you build a solid, proactive, and self-sustaining Alumni Club. It is not an absolute guide, however. That would be too limiting in scope. Instead, we encourage you to use your creative abilities to develop unique, successful club events. The only limitation is your imagination. And, as always, we are here to help.

The Alumni Club will create a platform for networking and maintaining lifelong relations with alumni, and will strengthen and perpetuate the bond between the local alumni community and AUA.

Role and Purpose of Alumni Clubs

The purpose of Alumni Club is to serve as a direct link between AUA and alumni by providing opportunities to maintain involvement through various activities and to foster alumni pride and a life-long commitment to AUA.

Regional Alumni Clubs bring AUA alumni and friends together for social outings, to promote AUA and keep alumni connected to their alma mater. Regional Alumni Clubs host many community events for alumni to participate in and have fun together. Alumni, their families and friends who live within a specified geographic area or who travel frequently to such areas can participate in these events and activities.

The Yerevan Alumni Club helps AUA in a variety of ways. Some typical events may include annual Alumni/Student dinners or community events that give a well-balanced insight into AUA to both alumni and friends of AUA.

Alumni Clubs have long provided a way for alumni and friends of the University to gather and renew their bonds of friendship and loyalty to their alma mater. Listed below you'll find a list of the roles alumni clubs play in helping the AUA.

- *Create a sense of belonging to the AUA community among alumni*
 - *Improve communication among alumni, students and the University*
 - *Plan and conduct a minimum of three events/programs per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30)*
 - *Serve as the channel of communication between individuals and the University by informing local club members of progress and challenges at AUA.*
 - *Promote activities that are beneficial to AUA such as student recruitment, scholarship fund-raising and career networking.*
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Club Leadership

Alumni Club leaders play an important role for AUA, serving as representatives of the university and the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development within their own communities. AUA alumni and friends who participate in club events look to the club leaders as their link to university updates. It is important to remember the influence you have as a club leader and put an emphasis on representing AUA in the best manner possible. In many cases, the club leader will be the only source of AUA related information within the community, so staying informed, responsible, and connected to alumni and friends is both fun and important.

With the understanding that different clubs may operate best under varying organizational structures, the establishment of any named officer position(s) is left to the volunteers themselves. For example, the Club may operate under the standard president/vice-president/treasurer structure or perhaps the Club prefers to operate under a more loosely configured icommittee structure. In any case, the club board must have a central point person (e.g., a ipresident or iboard chair) who assumes overall responsibility for the club.

Typically, the most effective clubs establish a Planning Committee structure with two to four volunteers. This helps to offset the workload and provides different and creative event ideas. A successful club is usually a direct result of an active Planning Committee.

Club leadership may include:

- *Organizing, planning and working events*
- *Informing alumni in your area of events and news*
- *Updating and maintaining communications and contact information with local alumni*
- *Serving as a representative for AUA in your area*

Estimated Time Dedicated to the Alumni Club

The time allocated to the efforts of the Alumni Club will vary depending on the number of events per year, size of the group, alumni population in the region, stage of the group (first weeks/months/years), role of the member, and overall activity level of the group. For guidance purposes only, you can expect to devote at least one hour per week.

Membership

The only requirement to be a member of the Alumni Club is to be a graduate of AUA. No membership dues shall be collected. Should there be costs involved in planning special events, the Alumni Clubs may decide to charge entry fees for events, or ask attendees to cover their own expenses.

Expectations from the Alumni Regional Clubs

Alumni Clubs promote the University by serving as a liaison between AUA and its alumni, former and prospective students, and friends. Alumni Clubs serve as an extension of the University and the expectations are as follows:

- *Organize at least two alumni events per year, which are in line with the needs and interests of the alumni,*
 - *For each event, one or two club leaders must serve as the event managers. This entails coordinating communication about the event, as well as overseeing event logistics (venue selection, registration, set up, etc.)*
 - *Take at least one photo and submit it to alumnirelations@aua.am within one week of each event, along with a short summary of the event,*
 - *Help update University records by obtaining address, phone, and email changes for alumni by submitting new information to the regional Alumni Club. These updates ensure that alumni receive club information and university announcements,*
 - *Ensure that information is posted consistently on the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development webpage,*
 - *Meet each year during the summer months to set a tentative calendar of events and assign responsibilities for those events,*
 - *Compose a letter from club leadership to club members, describing events from the past year, previewing planned activities for the year to come.*
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Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development Support

The Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development staff will assist with:

- *Providing a list of alumni who reside in your area,*
 - *Informing all alumni and administration about upcoming events in your area,*
 - *Setting up an e-mail address for the regional Alumni Club: [\(city/country\)alumniclub@alumni.aua.am](mailto:(city/country)alumniclub@alumni.aua.am)*
 - *Listing contact information for the Club and promoting events on the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development webpage.*
 - *Promoting club events via Facebook, LinkedIn, Special Bulletin and Calendar of Event.*
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Starting and Running an Alumni Club

- 1 *Get the list of alumni who reside in your area from the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development.*
- 2 *Send out a survey, which will provide for you the Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development attempting to find out the interests of the alumni in your area.*
- 3 *Review and assess the results of your survey. See if there is a group of individuals interested in leadership roles, or willing to volunteer their time. Gather interested alumni for a meeting and begin to plan a club activity.*
- 4 *Submit a list of club leadership to the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development.*

Planning a Club Event

Event Ideas

Ideas for an event are endless and what may work for one community may not work for another. Each event should be tailored to local tastes to maximize attendance and enjoyment. Some ideas include:

Structured Events	Casual Events
Receptions	Picnics (potluck or catered)
Buffet dinners	Happy hour
Sit-down dinners	Watch parties
Wine tasting	Night at Theater
Sport tournaments	Night at a Park

NOTE: Some of these functions require more time and planning than others

Event Planning Helpful Hints:

- Plan in advance, especially if you plan to do a mailing for the event. The production process begins 10 weeks (2 months) prior to the event, so event information will be needed as much as 12 weeks prior to allow for ample time.
- Set the budget. This can be done by considering the following:

Estimate the costs:

- Facility rental/tables/chairs
- Food and drinks (include tax & gratuity)
- Entertainment
- Miscellaneous

Estimate attendance: A safe estimate is to plan on five to ten percent of invited guests.

Divide the total estimated cost of the event by the estimated attendance to arrive at the per person cost.

– Ex. Total estimated cost = \$1,000

Estimated attendance = 100

– Cost per person = \$10 (it is often wise to add a dollar or two in order to cover any unforeseen expenses)

NOTE: Each event should be self-supporting. Be sure the cost for guests to attend covers all meals, facility and miscellaneous expenses. The meals for special guests or speakers should be complementary, so be sure to account for those expenses in your planning.

1 Meals: The meal for an event can be handled in several ways.

Catered/buffet: Working with event venue contacts, you can identify menu options and various per person costs ranging from plated meals to buffets. Your registration fee will reflect the costs of your meal.

Potluck: Every family should bring a main dish and either salad, vegetable or dessert. Also, attendees should provide their own table service. This helps keep costs down, but requires work on the part of the attendees.

Combination: Attendees can bring side dishes and/or dessert. The main course can either be catered or volunteers can grill hamburgers, chicken, pork chops, etc.

2 Beverages: Water, iced tea and lemonade are the least expensive to provide. Soda and juice are also alternatives. Alcohol is discouraged at alumni events that will have students in attendance.

3 Extra Table Service: It is a good idea to have extra plates, cups and serving utensils on hand for those who forget and for special guests.

4 On-site Registration: A registration table staffed by alumni volunteers should be set up.

- Event attendees should check-in to keep track of attendance, and provide updated contact information.
- Attendees can fill out name tags or pick up printed name tags
- High school students can fill out informational sheets provided by the AUA Office of Admissions.

Have the registration table sheltered (if outside) and in a convenient location at the entrance to the event. It is a good idea to have a small trash can on hand for name tag backings and miscellaneous trash.

EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE/CHECKLIST

6 months to 1 year in advance

Date: _____

- *Confirm event date with the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development staff to avoid conflicts with other University functions.*
- *Reserve location/facilities for event*

3 months in advance

Date: _____

Budget planning

Facility costs		Estimated attendance
Menu/catering		
Entertainment		Cost to attend
Miscellaneous		
Total		

- *Finalize details and assign specific duties: taking reservations, budget, food arrangements, decorations, contacting local high schools, inviting special guests, etc.*
- *Complete Event Information Form and send to AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development*

2 months in advance

Date: _____

Get designed and approved flier from the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development.

5 to 7 weeks in advance

Date: _____

Event fliers should be e-mailed to alumni in your area publicizing your event.

3 weeks in advance

Date: _____

E-mail will be sent from the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development to all Alumni

2 weeks in advance

Date: _____

The agenda for the evening should be finalized for the event.

CLUB EVENT INFORMATION FORM FOR SUBMITTING TO THE AUA OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Club name/area _____
Club leader _____
E-mail address _____
Phone number _____
Fax number _____
Home address _____

What is the name of your event?

Has this event been held before? Yes No

Date _____ Time(s) _____

Please list location, address, phone number and directions, if necessary.

Cost(s)

Please list people who can be contacted with questions about the event.

Name _____ Graduation year(s) _____

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

E-mail address _____

Name _____ Graduation year(s) _____

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

E-mail address _____

How can alumni make reservations?

TIPS FOR HOSTING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

- 1 Keep your event cost reasonable. A relatively high price will prevent alumni, especially recent graduates, from attending.
 - 2 Keep your program as brief as possible.
 - 3 You can never have enough help. Form a committee of volunteers and spread the work around as much as possible. This creates less work for everyone and results in a more smoothly run event.
 - 4 Select your date well in advance. It is best to outline your plans on an annual basis and notify the AUA Office of Alumni Relations and Career Development as early as possible.
 - 5 Involve alumni of all ages to ensure a well-rounded event and better attendance. Alumni, both young and old, have much to offer.
 - 6 For optimal attendance, promote advance ticket sales. The sale of tickets provides good publicity and inevitably enhances the attendance.
 - 7 Use telephone committees to contact those who have not responded to initial meeting notification.
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FAQ

Q: Can an alumni club charge membership dues so we can have more activities?

A: Alumni clubs do not charge dues for membership. In order to cover the cost for events, often clubs will charge individuals to attend.

Q: Who can obtain a list of alumni in a specific area?

A: Lists can only be released to the lead club volunteer (president or chairmen) who is directly involved in the planning of an alumni event. The lists cannot be given to any outside person or organization, nor can they be used for commercial or political purposes. AUA respects the privacy of our alumni and we will not release your information to anyone not a related with AUA. Please send an email to alumnirelations@aua.am with a detailed request for the use of the list.

Q: Who will be invited to events that our club sponsors?

A: For most events, invitations will be sent to all alumni and friends within a designated area.