



DREAM FOR AMERICA CHAPTER HANDBOOK

FALL 2024
COLLEGE EDITION

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER



DREAM FOR AMERICA

CHAPTER HANDBOOK

FALL 2024
COLLEGE EDITION



NATIONAL ORGANIZING DEPARTMENT

Welcome to the Dream for America family!

It's student leaders like you who help make our movement possible.

There are those on the far-right who insist we can "make America great again" by scapegoating immigrants, assaulting our civil rights, & fomenting hate against our institutions and each other.

Instead, Dream for America believes in building a country where everyone has the freedom to live authentically — that means civil rights, voting rights, LGBTQ+ rights, bodily autonomy, stopping gun violence, ending climate change, economic opportunity, & the chance to fulfill your version of the American Dream.

The heart of our movement lies not in partisan politics or sprinting towards extremism — but in grassroots organizing and authentic activism to build the most powerful pro-democracy grassroots network both online and on-campus across the country.

The MAGA movement & their dangerous Project 2025 agenda is coming for our campuses and our communities. Now is the time for us to fight back and defend liberal values. Join us today!

Your success is our success. We're rootin' for you!

A large, white, handwritten signature of William He, written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the left of a portrait of William He.

In Democracy,

William He

Founder & CEO

Dream for America



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INTRODUCTION

TO DREAM FOR AMERICA

Welcome to the Dream for America family! It's student leaders like you who help make our movement possible.

This handbook will guide you through establishing and sustaining a thriving collegiate chapter, offering you the tools and resources necessary to make a significant impact both on your campus and beyond!

HISTORY

Dream for America (DFA) is a 501(c)4 nonprofit founded on July 4, 2023 by then 16-year-old William He with the mission of building a national student movement focused on **identifying, educating, and mobilizing America's students to defend democracy, fight fascism, and advance liberal values**. Since our founding, Dream for America has raised half a million dollars, recruited volunteers in all 50 states, & reached young Americans 100 million times on social media.

Together, we will stop the MAGA movement both online and on-campus & win this culture war against the far-right by reclaiming **freedom, democracy, patriotism, and the pursuit of progress and happiness** as liberal values -- not conservative ones.



VISION

Dream for America is focused on illuminating every young American towards real democratic values and inspiring them to usher in a new wave of pro-democracy progressivism, echoing the visions of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Joe Biden.

Our institutions are under attack, the rule of law is being challenged, and the very foundations of our democracy are under enormous stress from pressure at home and abroad. These times demand bold leadership, new ideas, and a new generation of democracy defenders who are ready to carry the torch for a new kind of liberal patriotism grounded in faith, freedom, & positive populism.

Against the backdrop of hateful and divisive far-right forces drawing young Americans towards extremism, Dream for America is here to chart a better course and offer young people a better vision for America.

Young people all across America are fed up with ~~extremist right-wing~~ ideologies *tearing the fabric of our country apart*, and we are waking up.

Dream for America chapters are groups of democracy-defending activists who work tirelessly every day to build the most organized, active, and powerful pro-democracy grassroots network both online and on campuses across the country. We aim to guide young Americans through the development of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation so they can meaningfully engage in their communities.

As a Dream for America chapter leader, you will have the opportunity to build a strong progressive activist network on your campus, plan and execute activism initiatives, help students get registered to vote, and inform your peers about the importance of diversity, economic opportunity, & the people and institutions that make our country great. You will change what it means to be a liberal on campus by re-branding and promoting true democratic values.

CHAPTER OBLIGATIONS

To maintain your status as an active DFA chapter, your chapter must:

- I.** Maintaining an executive board/officer team with at least four positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, & Secretary.
- II.** Submit the Chapter Charter Agreement form (found online).
- III.** Organize at least one (1) event or initiative per academic term.
- IV.** Keep in touch with your local DFA field representatives on a regular basis.
- V.** Adhere to DFA's Chapter Code of Conduct and follow 501(c)4 regulations.

CHAPTER CODE OF CONDUCT

- I.** DFA chapters may never endorse any candidates running for public office. Leaders of the chapter may endorse candidates in their personal time, but may not do so on behalf of the chapter.
- II.** DFA chapters may never campaign for political candidates or aid political campaigns in any manner (donate money, recruit campaign volunteers, etc). Leaders of the chapter may do these activities in their personal time, but may not do so on behalf of the chapter.
- III.** DFA may not design, offer, produce, or sell merchandise without permission from the DFA National Team.
- IV.** DFA chapters may never host a speaker virtually or on-campus without prior approval from the DFA National Team.
- V.** DFA chapters & representatives shall prioritize inclusivity and diversity within their chapter activity and decision-making. The highest standards of respect, decency, and ethical behavior are expected of chapter leaders and members.
- VI.** DFA chapters and representatives shall report any instance of misconduct or violations of the Code of Conduct to the DFA National Team. Any violation of local or campus policy should be reported to the appropriate authorities.



STARTING YOUR CHAPTER

STARTING YOUR CHAPTER

Starting a Dream for America chapter is a great opportunity to build your resume, meet like-minded friends and classmates, gain leadership experience, and make a lasting impact on your campus and our country.

Not sure if we already have a Dream for America chapter at your school? Explore our Chapter Directory at dreamforamerica.org/chapters to find active chapters near you. If there's already a Dream for America chapter at your school, find ways to get involved and start your journey to defend democracy!

If you have questions about starting a chapter, feel free to reach out to us and get your questions answered at chapters@dreamforamerica.org.

RECRUITING YOUR DREAM TEAM (OFFICERS / E-BOARD)

The cornerstone of a successful Dream for America chapter is a strong and effective leadership team – your *Dream Team*.

The #1 reason why chapters fail is because they lack strong, diverse, and dedicated leadership teams. Invest time in identifying passionate and qualified leaders (as many as you can find) to help you lead your chapter.

Dream for America requires that **each chapter must have at least four (4) officer positions** filled: a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. DFA encourages you to create and fill additional leadership positions to strengthen their team. The more passionate and dedicated people you have on your team, the stronger your chapter will be!

Your school may require certain positions before becoming a registered student organization on campus. Before assembling your Dream Team, research any requirements to qualify as a registered student organization on your campus. **Familiarize yourself with these requirements and this Chapter Handbook.**

REQUEST A CHAPTER STARTER KIT

If you are ready to start organizing for a Dream for America chapter, please visit www.dreamforamerica.org/starterkit to request your official DFA Chapter Starter Kit.

Someone from our Organizing Team will follow-up within a few weeks to offer assistance and help you get your chapter started.

Your Chapter Starter Kit will contain:

- DFA's Chapter Handbook
- Contact info for your local field representative
- Collection of DFA organizing supplies (rally signs, stickers, buttons, brochures, informational handouts, & other materials)

STRUGGLING TO GET STARTED?

If you're struggling to get started or to fill your officer positions, try the following tips & tricks:

- Posting on social media (let ppl know you're starting a club & need officers).
- Talking to like-minded friends and classmates about Dream for America.
- Tabling and clip boarding (look for like-minded students; even if someone doesn't want to be an officer you can build a prospective membership list).
- Reaching out to members of like-minded groups on campus.
- Utilizing word-of-mouth or building rapport with new or transfer students.
- Finding mutual friends who are followers of Dream for America social media accounts on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn, and other platforms.
- Emailing different professors asking for the names of students who may be interested (ie. Political Science, Public Policy, History, Government, Economics).

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP ROLES

Creating a dynamic leadership team is crucial. Define roles, develop a plan, and set expectations to ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities. You will need to determine each person's specific responsibilities and duties, as well as when/how/where your leadership team will meet and operate.

Here is a summary of responsibilities for each required officer role — feel free to customize these job descriptions to best fit your chapter needs:

President

- Presides over DFA chapter meetings and events
- Organizes and oversees officer meetings
- Develops organizational goals and strategies
- Maintains communication with administrators, faculty, & the nat'l organization
- Serves as spokesperson for the chapter

Vice President

- Assumes the duties of the President in their absence
- Develops chapter goals and plans
- Facilitates officer elections & assists all executive officers as needed
- Coordinates chapter bonding activities & organizes end-of-year celebration

Treasurer

- Oversees chapter finances and maintains financial records
- Serves as primary signatory on financial accounts
- Develops and executes fundraising initiatives
- Applies for and manages Democracy Grants and campus funds
- Collects chapter dues (if applicable)

Secretary

- Keeps and distributes minutes for each chapter meeting
- Maintains up-to-date chapter membership records
- Obtains the appropriate rooms, spaces, and facilities for chapter activities
- Prepares, maintains, and manages the chapter calendar
- Notifies all members of upcoming meetings and events

OPTIONAL ROLES

In addition to the required four (4) core members of your chapter Dream Team, you may choose to create other roles to assist you in chapter operations, marketing, outreach, programming, and more. **Feel free to create as many additional positions to best fit your chapter needs!**

Social Media Director

- Manages social media accounts for the chapter
- Develops and maintains chapter website (if applicable)
- Crafts newsletters and email campaigns to keep members informed

Outreach Coordinator

- Plans and executes outreach initiatives
- Maintains relationships with like-minded organizations on campus
- Develops strategies to collaborate with other like-minded campus groups
- Serves as a liaison to Student Government/Council

Historian

- Captures images and video of chapter activities
- Maintain documented records of chapter events and accomplishments
- Maintains physical & digital files and documents to share with future officers during leadership transitions

Programming Director

- Develops educational sessions and training workshops
- Coordinates guest speakers, expert panels, and campus forums
- Provides resources for member development and learning
- Manages event logistics, including venues and supplies

You will also need to develop a plan for your chapter's activities. DFA suggests drafting a strategic plan that includes your chapter's goals, objectives, plans, and event ideas for the school year. Once goals are established, assign specific projects and tasks to your officer team. This will keep your team accountable and ensure that everyone stays focused on the chapter's goals!

SIGN THE DFA CHAPTER CHARTER AGREEMENT

The final step in officially establishing your chapter with Dream for America involves **reading and signing the DFA Chapter Charter Agreement.**

This agreement solidifies your chapter's commitment to the mission and values of Dream for America and outlines the expectations and responsibilities of both your chapter and the national organization.

This document will be filled out by the Chapter President, and they will need to provide the name and contact information for the chapter's Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers and members present at founding.

The Dream for America Chapter Charter Agreement can be found and accessed online at www.dreamforamerica.org/chapters.

Signing the agreement is the final step in becoming an official part of the Dream for America network, granting you access to critical resources, support, mentorship, and a community of like-minded activists ready to defend our democracy, fight fascism, and advance liberal values both online and on-campus.

Once the DFA Chapter Charter Agreement is signed, your chapter will be **officially recognized for the rest of the academic year**, provided all chapter guidelines in the agreement are followed.



REGISTERING YOUR
CHAPTER

BENEFITS OF BECOMING AN OFFICIAL STUDENT GROUP

While you may be free to assemble anywhere on campus, there are several key advantages to becoming an official student group recognized by your school.

Benefits of being an official student group may include: **access to school funding, classrooms/event space, tabling opportunities, campus mailboxes, listing in the school student group directory, & more.** Every Dream for America chapter should aim to achieve official recognition by the school.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL'S REGISTRATION PROCESS

The process for becoming a Registered Student Organization (RSO) varies by school. Some campuses may require paperwork, while others may require meetings, presentations, and documents. As you prepare to launch your chapter, please thoroughly research the specific requirements to become an RSO.

Unsure how to get started? Here are some potential steps you can take:

Contact Your School's Student Life/Activities Department

Reach out to your school's contact for the Student Life or Student Activities department. The staff will best understand the specific process & requirements.

Follow Up

Designate someone in your chapter to follow up with the school after submitting your paperwork/application. Schools may have long delays or forget to process your application. Follow-up regularly so you know the status of your application.

We're Here To Help

Dream for America is committed to helping each and every chapter achieve official school recognition. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your Dream for America Field Representative.

WRITE YOUR CHAPTER CONSTITUTION

Most schools require new student organizations to submit a Constitution and/or By-Laws as part of the registration process. Familiarize yourself with your school's specific requirements, as some have specific guidelines for crafting your Constitution that your club must follow.

Steps for Crafting Your Constitution:

Use the DFA Template

Dream for America offers a sample Chapter Constitution for you to use. Please visit www.dreamforamerica.org/samplechapterconstitution.

Collaborate with Your Dream Team

Work with your chapter leadership team to customize our template to fit your chapter's individual needs.

When your Constitution is complete, feel free to ask your Field Representative to review your document and make suggestions prior to submitting it to your school!

FINDING A FACULTY ADVISOR

Most schools require registered student organizations to have a faculty advisor to sponsor and/or sign off on the club.

Having trouble finding a faculty advisor? Here are some helpful tips:

Network With Like-Minded Groups

Ask other student leaders and organizations on campus who their faculty advisors are. Some professors will sponsor more than one group, or may recommend other professors who may be a good fit for your chapter.

Email Professors

Reach out to professors in relevant departments including, but not limited to: Political Science, Public Policy, History, Government, & Economics. Ask them if they would like to be an advisor or if they know someone else who would.

Contact Your Field Representative

Dream for America works with a number of organizations that can recommend professors to serve as faculty advisors. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need assistance!

Once you have a faculty advisor, meet with them to determine their communication preferences and ideal role in your club. Many advisors often don't intend to have a major role in the activities of student groups. **Regardless of their level of involvement, be sure to keep your advisors updated on major events and club activities.**

TIPS FOR CHAPTER APPROVAL

The chapter approval process can be time-consuming and complex. But fear not – **here are tips to help guide you through that process:**

Understand the Process

Familiarize yourself with your school’s specific procedures and make sure all tasks are finished promptly and diligently. You can find this information by searching for the steps online or on your school’s website.

Be Prepared

Student groups may need to present in front of a student government meeting or create a report for submission alongside their application. Be prepared anything that may be asked of you; prove to decision makers that you’re driven, devoted, and committed to your new club.

Build Positive Relationships With Key Leaders

Find out who plays a key role in approving student groups. Make an effort to cultivate positive and genuine relationships with those important figures. Don’t be disingenuous -- just be friendly and get to know them as people! This will come in handy if any roadblocks appear.

Focus On The Benefits For The Student Body

What is the ROI (return on investment)? Be prepared to explain and demonstrate how your chapter will benefit your campus and the general student body.

Contact Your DFA Field Representative

Dream for America staff members are always available to support you every step of the way. We would be more than happy to help you work through this process and get your chapter approved!

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHAPTER GETS DENIED BY YOUR SCHOOL

DO NOT GIVE UP!

Sometimes DFA chapters will get denied by the school when they apply to be a registered student organization on campus.

Don't worry or feel bad if your chapter is denied; Dream for America will provide assistance and work closely with you and your team until your chapter gets approved!

Here are some tips to help you navigate this process:

Missed Deadline OR Incomplete Information?

If your chapter was denied because you missed a deadline and/or a key piece of information in your application, make the necessary edits and re-submit your application as soon as possible.

No Specific Reason? Contact Your School & Field Representative

If your chapter was denied for an unspecified reason, ask if you can receive a reason for the denial in writing. Many schools require that this be provided if students request it.

Next, contact your Field Representative as soon as possible. Be sure to include the reason for your denial (if it was provided) & any correspondence to and from the school.

Last Resort: Start A Democracy Hub

If all fails, you may also charter your chapter as a democracy hub, which is associated with a geographical area or region rather than a specific school. Visit www.dreamforamerica.org/democracyhub to learn more.



CHAPTER

COMMUNICATION

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Excellent and effect communication is the foundation of any successful chapter. Bad communication or a lack thereof is one of the most common reasons students leave chapters. As you prepare to launch you chapter, form a comprehensive and inclusive internal communication plan that ensures everyone feels heard and in the loop.

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

Keeping a membership database that is organized and easily accessible is essential no matter the size of your chapter. One of the easiest ways to do this is to [create a Google Spreadsheet on Google Drive](#).

At minimum, your database should contain the following pieces of information:

- *First Name*
- *Last Name*
- *Email Address*
- *Cell Phone Number*
- *Grade Level and/or Graduation Year*

If you're using a spreadsheet, separate each category into a separate column for easy sorting. Assign an officer to maintain and update the membership database. They will be responsible for adding new members' information and updating contact info as needed.

MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATION PLAN

Meet with your officer team to decide how and when to communicate information to your chapter's members. Decide where you will make announcements ([email, text, social media posts, etc](#)) & how often these announcements will be made ([weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc](#)). Inform your members at the beginning of the semester about your membership communication plan so they know when and where to expect updates.

ASSIGN AN INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Ensuring that everyone stays in the loop is a critical task. Designate an officer who will be responsible for managing internal communications. This can be the same person responsible for the membership database, or somebody else.

This officer will be responsible for communicating about chapter meetings and events, as well as sending out weekly announcements and updates.

This person will be responsible for announcing chapter meetings and events, sending out newsletters, & providing timely updates on chapter operations. No member should have to attend a meeting to know when the chapter is tabling or when the next big event is happening.

DEVELOP AN OFFICER COMMUNICATION PLAN

Beyond communicating with your members, also develop a plan for how officers will communicate between each other.

We recommend setting an in-person officer meeting schedule (ie. every other Wednesday at 6:00pm). Please be respectful of people's time and come prepared to with an agenda.

Recognizing that all students lead busy lives, try to keep in-person meetings to a minimum & utilize digital tools for quick announcements and updates. Whether it's email, an Instagram group chat, or apps like GroupMe, find something that works well for you and your team.

TIPS FOR DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Use the following tips and tricks to maximize your effectiveness at communicating via email or elsewhere:

- BCC recipients to protect privacy and prevent spamming.
- Use email services such as **GMass or Mailchimp** to personalize emails sent out to larger groups.
- Be as brief as possible (without leaving out key details).
- Use bullet points and lists to simplify longer strands of information
- Utilize apps like **GroupMe and Whatsapp** to create chapter wide group-chats.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Developing a plan for external communication is a key part of staying on-message & preserving your chapter's brand and reputation on campus.

CHAPTER SOCIAL MEDIA

Dream for America strongly encourages all chapters to create social media accounts to communicate with members and the general public.

Recommended platforms include, but are not limited to: **Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok**. These accounts should be used to post photo and video content highlighting chapter meetings, tabling events, and other activities.

Designate an officer to post on a regular basis (**1-3 times a week on each platform**) and promptly respond to DMs. Inactive accounts can make it look like your chapter is inactive and dissuade prospective members.

GUIDELINES FOR CHAPTER SOCIAL MEDIA

The usernames for your chapter's accounts should adhere to these guidelines:

Facebook

Follow this standard format for your title: “**Dream for America at [SCHOOL NAME]**”. Create a Facebook page rather than a private Facebook Group. Designate an officer to post regularly and promptly respond to DMs.

- Example: **Dream for America at Clemson University**

Instagram

Follow this standard format for your handles: “**@DFA[SCHOOL]**”. Designate an officer to respond to DMs & create stories, reels, and posts on a regular basis.

- Example: **@DFAStanford** or **@DFAUMich**

Twitter

Follow this standard format for your handles: “**@DFA[SCHOOL]**”. Designate an officer to tweet on a regular basis and promptly respond to DMs.

- Example: **@DFAYale** or **@DFAatHarvard**

TikTok

Follow this standard format for your handles: “**@DFA[SCHOOL]**”. Designate an officer to create engaging TikToks on a regular basis.

- Example: **@DFAUCBerkley** or **@DFAatClemson**

CHAPTER EMAIL ACCOUNTS

If more than one person is emailing members, we recommend using Gmail to create an official email account for your chapter. Gmail offers a suite of resources that include Google Calendar, Google Drive, etc.

Your email should be easy to remember. Example: **DFAatASU@gmail.com**

If you choose to create an email, be sure to assign an officer responsible for checking and responding to emails regularly. DFA will list your chapter email on our chapter director, alongside your social media accounts.

CHAPTER WEBSITE

Depending on your school, a chapter website may be beneficial. If many other student organizations at your school have a website, then we recommend your chapter have one as well.

Some schools may have a website platform that your chapter can build a basic website with. If your school doesn't have one and you still want a website, you can easily design one for free on [Wix.com](https://www.wix.com) or [Weebly.com](https://www.weebly.com).

If a website is created for your chapter, be sure to assign an officer to update the website on a regular basis.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

DFA chapters are permitted to give comments to school newspapers or local media on behalf of their individual chapter, provided that comments do not violate DFA's 501(c)4 restrictions.

DFA chapters are not permitted to give comments on behalf of Dream for America's national organization. If you receive requests from national press outlets, please bring them to the attention of our national press team via press@dreamforamerica.org.

HOW TO WRITE PRESS RELEASES

A press release is an official statement issued to media outlets to provide information on a particular event or topic. When writing press releases, you are writing a pitch. Media outlets receive countless press releases everyday, so the quality of your press release will determine whether or not your event is covered.

Tips to grab attention & getting you the coverage your chapter deserves:

Use the DFA Template

DFA offers a sample press release template for you to use. Access this template and tailor it to fit your needs at dreamforamerica.org/pressreleasetemplate. Reach out to press@dreamforamerica.org for further assistance.

Keep It Short, But Engaging – No More Than One Page

Convey all key information concisely. Use clear, direct language and avoid jargon or overly technical terms. A press release should ideally be one page in length.

Craft a Compelling Headline

Your press release is a pitch. Your headline is the first thing a journalist will see, so make it count. Your headline should be catchy, informative, and to the point.

Get To The Point

In the first paragraph, answer the who, what, when, where, why, and how of your event or topic. Assume your reader scans your press release and only reads the first few sentences. Include supporting information in following paragraphs.

Use Exact Dates & Be Flawless

For example, use “Friday, January 20th, 2025” instead of “next Friday”. Proofread your release multiple times to avoid spelling and grammar mistakes.

Provide Contact Info

Be sure to list a name, number, and email for someone who can quickly respond to requests from the press. Be sure that your contact person is easily accessible and prepared to take calls and emails.

PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE



[CATCHY, DESCRIPTIVE, & ENGAGING HEADLINE]
[FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE A RELEVANT GRAPHIC OR IMAGE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[MONTH] [DATE], [YEAR]

CONTACT: First & Last Name, Title, Email, Phone Number

CITY, STATE — Insert a brief description of your topic or event. Be sure to include the who, what, where, when, why, and how. Be brief and descriptive. Assume your reader scans your press release and only reads the first few sentences. Include supporting information in the following paragraphs.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: Provide additional important details. Do not put any opinion statements here.

“Any quotes from authority figures like professors or celebrities who are coming to your event, put it here,” said [PERSON].

“Quote from a chapter leader or member. Avoid having quotes from the press contact at the top of the page,” said [PERSON].

FINAL PARAGRAPH: Provide any additional, less important information about your topic or event here.

MUST INCLUDE AT END: Dream for America is a Gen Z-led group educating and mobilizing students to defend democracy, fight fascism, and advance liberal values. The organization is focused on building a progressive alternative to Charlie Kirk’s Turning Point USA & is the nation’s fastest growing liberal youth organization. Learn more at dreamforamerica.org.

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CHAPTER RESOURCES

DFA's ORGANIZING TEAM

Connecting with a DFA Field Representative or Regional Director is the single best way to ensure that your chapter succeeds. Our experienced organizers are ready and willing to help your chapter with everything from recruiting new members and getting your group approved on campus to coordinating logistics and organizing the best event on your campus this year.

CHAPTER LOGOS



To ensure all DFA chapters have consistent and uniform branding, it's vital that all chapters only use the logo provided by DFA and do not attempt to create their own.

To access our logo templates, visit: www.dreamforamerica.org/chapterlogos

CHAPTER BANNERS

Dream for America offers chapters with custom, union-printed, school-specific 2x4 banners that can be used for tabling, meetings, or decoration at events.

To order a custom banner, visit www.dreamforamerica.org/custombanners.

NOTE: DFA will only provide one (1) banner per chapter per school year.

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

Dream for America offers a wide range of pre-made social media graphics for various platforms that including posts, icons, and even wallpapers for your phone. These graphics can be used for chapter social media accounts.

To download our graphics: www.dreamforamerica.com/downloadgraphics

ORGANIZING SUPPLIES

Dream for America's national office provides a wide range of organizing supplies for DFA chapters including, but not limited to: palm cards, buttons, stickers, brochures, booklets, informational flyers, t-shirts, hats, tote-bags, & more!

To request supplies, visit www.dreamforamerica.org/supplies.

CUSTOM EVENT MATERIAL

If your chapter is hosting an event with an expected attendance of 100+, Dream for America will provide any of the following graphics:

- Rally signs (12 x 18)
- Promotional flyers
- Stickers
- Social media graphics

To request custom materials, visit: dreamforamerica.org/customeventgraphics. Allow for **at least THREE (3) WEEKS** for design and printing, and another week for signage to be delivered. Be sure to fully fill out graphics requests & ahead of time.

GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING

Dream for America offers "Democracy Grants" to all our chapters & other like-minded student groups. **DFA grants range from \$100 - \$1,000.** DFA grants can be used for supplies, bringing a speaker to campus, hosting an event, and more. To learn more & apply for a grant, visit: dreamforamerica.com/democracygrants.

Refer to the "Funding & Finances" section for tips on getting your democracy grant approved. For smaller funding requests (ie. \$50 for pizza at chapter meetings), chapter leaders are encouraged to contact their Field Representative who has a budget for day-to-day chapter expenses. Funding from Field Representative is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For a full list of chapter resources, please visit: dreamforamerica.org/chapters.



MAINTAINING YOUR
CHAPTER

CREATE PLANS AND SET GOALS

Before the start of each semester, your officer team should meet to set plans, priorities, and goals for your chapter. We recommend coordinating at least one major event each semester, planning a trip to a national DFA conference, and hosting several organizing and/or tabling events.

Be sure to set ambitious, but realistic and achievable goals. Take the time to develop a definitive plan utilizing the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and delegate tasks immediately. Schedule regular check-ins to review progress, stay flexible, and make necessary adjustments. Be sure to create opportunities for members to give feedback and provide input. Strive to create a culture of inclusion and open-dialogue.

Whether your goal is to grow your chapter by X members or bring a big name speaker to campus, find a way for your members to get involved. Planning a trip to a DFA conference is a great way for everyone to get involved with our national organization. There is no limit on how many members can attend & DFA HQ will work with you to make travel and lodging affordable for your team.

ALWAYS BE RECRUITING

The key to building and maintaining a successful chapter is to consistently recruit and expand your membership base. Any organization is only as good as the people it keeps. Thus, it's in your interest to recruit as many members as possible.

Never miss an opportunity to recruit new members. Whether it's organizing a chapter meeting or an event on campus, always have a clipboard and a sign-up sheet ready to go. You can download and print free sign-up sheets from our website: dreamforamerica.org/signupsheets.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Tabling

Set up an engaging and visually appealing table at campus events, student fairs, and high-traffic areas. Organize creative gimmicks, interactive displays, hand out informational brochures, and offer incentives like free food or merchandise to draw in potential members.

Social Media

Utilize a variety of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, or TikTok to not only connect with a wider audience but also engage with students through posts, stories, and live sessions. Encourage interaction by hosting online events or contests.

Classroom Presentations

Collaborate with professors to schedule engaging and informative presentations about your chapter during classes or after school. Provide real-life examples, success stories, and opportunities for students to ask questions and get involved.

Flyers and Posters

Design eye-catching flyers and posters that showcase the benefits of joining your chapter. Distribute them strategically around campus, including in academic buildings, dormitories, and popular hangout spots.

Word of Mouth

Foster a sense of community within your current members and encourage them to actively promote the chapter to their friends and classmates. Organize social events, team-building activities, and networking opportunities to strengthen relationships and attract new recruits through personal recommendations.

TIPS FOR TABLING EVENTS

DFA encourages every chapter to table on a regular basis.

Tips on making your tabling experience as positive & productive as possible:

Organize A Team To Help You

Tabling by yourself is a lot to take on. Before you start, organize a core team of 2-3 organizers. If you plan on tabling for several hours, schedule shifts throughout the day so you or your team doesn't get burnt out. We recommend tabling between 10am - 3pm.

Pick Strategic Locations

Choose high-traffic areas on campus where students are likely to pass by. Consider setting up at the quad or near popular hangout spots, dining halls, or the entrance of key buildings.

Have The Right Supplies Ready & In Abundance

Effective tabling requires having the right supplies. DFA provides all chapters a free start kit, which includes a wide variety of tabling supplies (rally signs, stickers, buttons, brochures, informational handouts, & other materials). Order these supplies at dreamforamerica.org/starterkit. Allow two (2) weeks for delivery.

You will likely run out of supplies very quickly at larger events like school fairs. Please contact your Field Representative if you need additional supplies.

Eye-Catching Displays & Interactive Elements

Create visually appealing displays that showcase our organization. Use colorful banners, posters, and props to grab attention and make your table stand out from a distance. Incorporate interactive elements like games, quizzes, or demonstrations to encourage engagement from students.

Always Have Sign-Up Sheets Ready

Many students may become interested in your chapter as a result of your tabling. Make these students a priority and collect their contact information (name, email, & phone number). Feel free to use a laptop, a tablet, or our sign-up sheets. Whatever you do, make sure your sign-up method is reliable and easy-to-use.

Be Educated & Well-Versed in Policy/Talking Points

Before tabling on campus, ensure that your organizers are well-versed and educated in the issues that you will be discussing. Nothing is more unprofessional or damaging to our movement than having unprepared young activists making illogical and inept arguments. We cannot give the far-right any ammunition.

Do your research and get educated ahead of time so that your team is prepared to discuss and debate the issues with your peers. Craft and share talking points with everyone whom will be tabling to ensure your message is uniform.

Visit www.dreamforamerica.org/issues for our policy priorities. Stay tuned for more educational and informative resources coming soon.

Stand In Front Your Table, Be Engaged, & Put Your Phone Away

Look approachable by putting away your phone and standing in front of your table to respectfully engage other students. Don't miss valuable opportunities to connect with your peers who may be interested in your club.

Craft engaging questions that you can ask students as they pass by. Some questions we recommend to help you get started, include but are not limited to:

- Do you hate fascism?
- Do you love democracy?
- Have you heard about Project 2025?
- Have you heard about our new student organization, Dream for America
- Would you like a free sticker?
- Would you like to hear XYZ speak on campus next week?

ALWAYS be kind and friendly to everyone who walks by, no matter their political beliefs. Respectfully present your case, even if they disagree with you. Feel free to put your passion on display, but **NEVER** raise your voice or get angry and hostile.

Follow-Up Immediately With New Members

After tabling, enter each new sign-up into your membership database. Afterwards, be sure to **follow up within 24 hours** with a text or email inviting them to the next chapter meeting or event before people forget or lose interest.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Engaging your chapter members is critical for the success of your DFA chapter. **Whether you're looking to build community within your chapter or increase turnout for chapter events, here are a few suggestions to get you started:**

Workshops and Panels

Organize workshops and panels that address topics of interest to your members. Invite guest speakers and experts to provide valuable insights and foster engaging discussions.

Collaborations

Partner with other student organizations or local community groups for joint events. This can help you tap into new networks and introduce your chapter to potential new members who share similar interests and values.

Recognition and Rewards

Show appreciation for your members' hard work and dedication. Create a recognition program to celebrate their contributions, whether through awards, shout-outs on social media, or special events.

Regular Communication

Keep your members in the loop with regular updates. Send out newsletters or emails with important information, upcoming events, and member spotlights. Consistent communication helps maintain interest and build community.

Feedback and Adaptation

Solicit feedback to understand what members value most and where there might be room for improvement. Use this feedback to adapt your strategies and ensure your chapter meets the needs and interests of its members.

By implementing these strategies, you can create a vibrant, engaged community within your DFA chapter, leading to greater success and impact.

PLANNING AND EXECUTING SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

Throughout the semester, general membership meetings may be necessary to conduct official chapter business, prepare for upcoming events, & are essential for maintaining momentum and engagement. Establish a consistent schedule for meetings and communicate this schedule to all members.

Make your meetings interesting, engaging, and worthwhile. If students feel like your meetings are boring, they will stop showing up. Let's make liberalism fun!

Find A Good Venue

Select a time and date that works well for your team. Check your school calendar to make sure your meeting doesn't conflict with a major campus-wide event.

Pick a room that you know you can fill with people. A standing room only will always be better than having a sea of empty chairs. Smaller rooms may offer members a chance to socialize, build community, & get to know each other before and after meetings. Consider your expected attendance and the audio-visual equipment you will need (projectors, screens, sound equipment, etc).

If possible, select a meeting location in a central and well-known location on campus. If your meeting room is hard to find, hang up signage so people can easily find your room.

Promote Your Meeting

Start publicizing your meeting as soon as you confirm your venue. Some ways to promote your meeting include, but are not limited to:

- Sending emails to all your members every week & on the day of the meeting
- Sending personal follow-up texts to everyone in your membership database
- Handing out flyers and/or hanging posters to promote your meeting
- Chalking about your meeting on a high-traffic sidewalk
- Encouraging your members & officers to bring a friend

Be Prepared & Have The Right Materials

Your chapter should strive to make the DFA chapter experience as positive, interesting, and engaging as possible. Here's what we recommend:

- Signage for outside the meeting room
- Sign-up sheets to collect names, emails, and phone #'s from all attendees
- A/V equipment (if needed) to show slides and/or videos during the meeting
- "What is DFA?" Slides (if it's your first meeting and/or a new member meeting, download and customize our template at dreamforamerica.org/chapters)
- DFA giveaways (buttons, stickers, rally signs, etc)
- Snacks and drinks + or even pizza!

Prepare A Meeting Agenda

A meeting agenda ensures meetings are productive. Meet with your officers and develop a meeting agenda ahead of time. **See our sample meeting agenda for ideas:** www.dreamforamerica.org/samplemeetingagenda.

Designate who will lead each activity and set time limits. **The ideal chapter meeting length is 30–60 minutes.**

Follow-Up ASAP After the Meeting

Add all new members to your membership database after the meeting. Designate an officer to send personal follow-ups and welcome messages to new members who attended the meeting. **An example of something you could send:**

Hey [FIRST NAME]! 🙌

Thanks for coming by our Dream for America meeting last night! It was so great to meet you. I had a great time [ACTIVITIES YOU DID/CONVERSATIONS YOU HAD]!

I'm tabling with DFA next Friday from 2:00pm–4:00pm. If you're available, feel free to stop by so I can tell you more about some other events we're planning!

We're also having our next meeting on Friday, January 20th at 6pm in [MEETING ROOM]. Will you be able to make it?

Thanks again for coming! Hope to see you soon!

MEETING AGENDA TEMPLATE



Dream for America [SCHOOL NAME] Chapter Meeting Agenda

Date: *[Insert Date]*

Time: *[Insert Time]*

Location: *[Insert Location]*

I. Sign-in Reminder

- Members should sign-in as they arrive. Remind members who have yet to sign in to do so before the meeting begins.

II. Call to Order, Always Start On-Time!

III. Introductions from Officers

IV. Chapter Updates

- Summarize the success of previous events, recognize students and organizers who made those events possible.
- Promote upcoming events and activities.
- Invite members to get engaged by signing up for chapter committees, tabling shifts, and upcoming events.
- Open forum to suggest chapter initiatives or ideas for upcoming events.

V. Main Activity (ideas below)

- Invite a professor, local official, community leader, or other speaker to come lead a public policy discussion around a certain topic.
- Have members contribute ideas for talking points for tabling events.
- Organize a debate, panel, forum, and/or video screening and discussion.
- Divide members into groups to help make protest signs, hang up posters, or chalk the sidewalks for an upcoming event.

VI. Closing & Adjournment

- Take a group photo at the end of every meeting.
- Final announcements, updates, call-to-actions.
- Invite members to take home DFA signage and merchandise on their way out.

Visit dreamforamerica.org/samplemeetingagenda to make a copy.



CAMPUS EVENTS AND
ACTIVISM

NATIONAL ORGANIZING CAMPAIGNS

Each semester, Dream for America may organize a series of national organizing campaigns where DFA chapters across the country join together and mobilize their members to promote a specific message, issue, or policy on their campus. Potential campaigns include, but are not limited to: “Ban Guns, Not Books”, & “Stars, Stripes, & Abortion Rights”, and “F*ck Fascism.”

DFA’s national team may issue press releases and feature local chapters organizing various events and initiatives on campus. Chapter members who participate in national campaigns may have the opportunity to offer quotes and/or be part of media interviews coordinated by our national press team.

Chapters can participate in one of DFA’s national organizing campaigns by hanging up signs, bringing speakers to campus, promoting the topic while tabling, hosting film screenings, or organize other events that support the national campaign in some way. The sky is the limit!

Chapters are always encouraged to be part of each campaign, but participation is never required. If our campaign is “F*ck Fascism” you’re still welcome to talk about climate change, affordable healthcare, or whatever issue your chapter prefers. DFA campaigns are guides, not requirements.

To view a list of upcoming organizing campaigns, stay tuned and visit dreamforamerica.org/campaigns for updates. When new initiatives are launched, DFA will provide talking points, content, and ideas for each campaign.

CHAPTER ACTIVISM IDEAS

DFA chapters are required to host one activism event each semester. While a basic tabling event technically fulfills this requirement, many chapters hope to do more than that. Some of the most popular events and activism ideas organized by DFA chapters are described below. If you need help executing any of these events, please feel free to contact your DFA Field Representative.

Climate Countdown Clock

Organize a group of 5 to 15 club members. Organizing such a large group may be difficult, so be sure to select a date and time well in advance that works for everyone.

Prior to your activism event, you'll need to prepare your climate countdown signs. You should make at least 5 signs total. 1 sign for each number and unit of time displayed on the clock such as "4" "YEARS" "3" "4" "5" "DAYS" "1" "1" "HOURS" "3" "1" "MINUTES" "2" "2" "SECONDS". You could also group the numbers like "4 YEARS" "345 DAYS" "11 HOURS" "31 MINUTES" "22 SECONDS". If possible, also include a sign that says "TIME LEFT TO LIMIT GLOBAL WARMING TO 1.5°C". The writing on the posters should be big and bold so it can be seen from a distance.

On the day of your event, each person participating will hold a large poster board with a number on it and stand in order to create a human climate countdown clock. When everyone stands in order with a large sign, it should draw a lot of attention on campus.

In addition to having students holding the signs, have 1-2 club members talk with interested students about the meaning of the number, give away informational materials about the climate countdown clock and the need for climate action, environmental conservation, & a responsible transition towards green energy. Be sure to collect sign-up information from prospective members.

If you're short on organizers to execute this event, consider making one large sign with the climate countdown on it to reduce the number of people needed.

Cut the Student Loan Debt Cake

Rivaling Turning Point USA's "Cut the Debt" event, "Cut the Student Loan Debt" takes at least 2-3 people to execute. Choose a date and time that works for at least 2-3 of your members or officers.

Decide if you're going to use pizza or cake. If you use cake, place an order for a sheet cake from a local bakery. Double check if your school has catering services available that will provide sheet cakes or will require you to exclusively use their vendor. If you're using pizza, order a pizza. How much food you order depends on how long your event will last. The longer the event, the more food you will need.

Once you choose between cake or pizza, purchase or request other supplies such as paper plates, napkins, and cutlery (if you're using cake) from your school. Prior to your event, your group will write the average student loan debt at your school on each paper plate in sharpie. You can research this number through Google.

Set up an easel with a white board or giant sticky-note pad that reads "Debt-Free Dreams". Students can write down their goals and dreams & share stories about how their life has been impacted by student loan debt. This visual representation can serve as a powerful reminder of why reform is needed.

You'll also want to prepare informational flyers about the student loan debt crisis so that students who pick-up a slice of pizza or cake can learn about the impact of student loan debt on all Americans. For example, your information flyer may say, "Student debt is holding millions of Americans back and crushing the financial futures of millions of young Americans trying to make ends meet. Policies like capping interest rates, making community college tuition free, and providing student debt relief to low-income Americans are a critical step towards strengthening our economy and expanding the financial horizons of millions."

Next, reserve tabling space on campus for your event. Most registered student groups are able to reserve tabling space for free through the school. If this isn't an option, buy/rent a folding table that you can set up for your event. Be sure to pick a high-traffic area on campus near popular hangout spots, dining halls, or the entrance of key buildings.

On the day of your event, set up your pizza or cake on the table and as students walk by, hand them a "slice of student loan debt" and your informational flyers. Encourage them to write on the "Debt-Free Dreams" board and try to engage them in a meaningful conversation about the need for student loan debt relief.

Drowning in Economic Inequality

Hosting an "Economic Opportunity Fair" is a fun and engaging way to start conversations about poverty and the feasibility of the American Dream. To host this event, start by selecting a date, time, and venue for your event. This event will need to be done outside, so pick a day with good weather.

Next, research and rent a dunk tank. Before you confirm the rental and delivery, make sure your school permits you to set up a dunk tank on campus.

Prior to your event, create a list of 15+ trivia questions related economic opportunity, fair wages, and income inequality. As students approach your dunk tank and table, ask each person to answer 1-2 trivia questions from your list. If a student answers correctly, they have the opportunity to throw a tennis or soft ball at the dunk tank target.

You can also setup an additional table where students can play a game simulating different economic scenarios to better understand the impact of various economic policies. Students will be tasked with balancing the budget or making decisions about allocating tax-dollars. Be sure to highlight the long-term harm that privatizing welfare programs, protectionist trade policies, & tax-cuts for the rich have on our economy. Emphasize how liberal policies like the child tax credit, infrastructure spending, and cutting red tape for small businesses are good for both workers and your wallets.

Be sure to provide flyers, brochures, and opportunities for students to learn more about liberal economic policies and to get involved with your chapter. Have 3-4 people working the event at all times. You will need someone to run the dunk tank, someone to sit in the dunk tank, someone to ask trivia, and someone to run the table. If you have enough members, consider creating shifts for each job at the event so that students get a chance to try different things.

Before and during your event, advertise the event on all social media platforms as well as on flyers, and/or chalking around campus.

Walls of Hope, Not Hate

Host a “Wall of Hope, Not Hate” event where students can share their or their family’s immigration stories on a large interactive display satirizing far-right attempts to demonize immigrants and build walls of hate. This event aims to acknowledge that America is strong because of our diversity, not in spite of it. Immigrants are essential to our culture and critical to our economic prosperity; they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, not as political pawns.

Recruit 2-3 chapter members. Choose a date and time that works for your team & reserve a central space on campus where the display will be highly visible.

Prepare a large cork board or whiteboard to serve as the central display. Use large poster boards or multiple smaller boards if space is limited. Add elements like flags, a world map, and culturally relevant decorations to create a display that looks like a border wall. Provide blank cards or papers where students can write or draw their immigration stories or family histories. Include pens, markers, and decorative supplies for creativity.

Offer resources for students to learn more about humane immigration policies & the need to secure the border while still retaining our shared democratic values. Take photos of the completed display and share them on social media.

Pong for Progress

An educational twist on the iconic college game “beer pong.” Instead of playing for drinks, participants will be playing for government policies and programs that expand economic opportunity, defend our rights, & keep our families safe.

First, you will need to buy the materials listed below:

- 6-12 5 gallon buckets (six for each side set up like beer pong)
- Two balls (bouncy balls or soft balls)
- Large labels to put on each bucket with different public policy proposals (Social Security, Roe v. Wade, Affordable Care Act, Free Trade, Food Stamps, Medicare & Medicaid, Ban Assault Weapons, YIMBY, Student Loan Debt Relief, Legalize Marijuana, Foreign Aid, IRS, FBI, CIA, ATF, EPA, NATO, etc)
- Poster board and markers
- Flyers about the various programs and/or departments mentioned above

If your budget allows, you can order a pre-assembled set of supplies at bearpong.com. Next, reserve an outdoor space in a high-traffic area on campus.

Before students begin to play, make sure they sign up to get involved with your DFA chapter. The goal of the game is to make a shot in each bucket, until there are no buckets remaining. Throughout the event, be sure to talk with participants on how the programs and/or departments are useful, vital, & necessary.

Film Screenings

Film screenings (which includes both movies and documentaries) are an excellent way to attract new people into your club who may not be familiar with DFA or often engage in our activism events. They also double as social gatherings where members of your club can invite friends and meet new people.

Select a film that relates to current events, politics, public policy, history, and/or democratic values. Some ideas for films include, but are not limited to: Don't Look Up, Parasite, Vice, The Post, Selma, Milk, The Trial of the Chicago 7, & The Big Short.

Review your school's policies on hosting movie screenings. Obtain a copy of the movie, either by DVD or by confirming its availability on a streaming platform. Before the event, book a space that will fit your expected audience & ensure you have the necessary A/V equipment, such as projectors and DVD players.

Next, create an agenda for the movie night. Designate someone to introduce the film and explain why it was chosen. Consider hosting a discussion either before or after the screening to explore the film's themes and connect them to our values.

On the day of the event, arrive early to set up the room, arrange snacks for your guests, and test the movie. As students arrive, collect their contact information so you can follow up about future activism events hosted by your group.

Watch Parties

A watch party is a fantastic way to engage your members with current events. Start by choosing an upcoming debate to watch, whether it's a presidential debate, local debate, or another relevant event. Find out the start time and the channel it will air on, or check if it will be available for online streaming.

Next, reserve a space where you can watch the debate, ensuring you have access to a TV with cable or a projector and computer for streaming. Choose a room with comfortable seating and consider providing food for your attendees, if your budget permits. Promote your event by sending emails to members, posting flyers around campus, and chalking campus side. Make sure all materials include the date, time, location, and any mention of free food if applicable.

On the day of the event, arrive early to set up the room & test the TV or projector.

Chalk Your Campus & Signage Barnstorm

One of the most effective ways to spread your message is through a chalking your campus and engaging in a signage barnstorm campaign. Start by selecting your message (ie. "F*ck Fascism", "Ban Guns, Not Books", "Stars, Stripes, & Abortion Rights", or a combination of messages from other national organizing campaigns). We recommend using the same poster designs (or a small collection of different designs) to make your message stand out better.

Once you've decided on your message, stock up on at least 100+ DFA rally signs.

Next, organize a team of chapter members to assist with the barnstorm. Some students may try to take your posters down, so it's best to hang up signs at night so they're visible to large numbers of people the next morning.

On the day of the barnstorm, bring your posters and plenty of tape that won't damage school property. Hang up posters on bulletin boards and other public areas around campus. If you can't hang posters, consider chalking your message on sidewalks instead.

Petitions

Circulating a petition to garner support for your chapter's top policy priorities can be a highly effective activism strategy.

Start by selecting an issue for your petition, which can be either a national concern or a local issue affecting your campus or community. Once you've chosen an issue, create your petition, ensuring each page has a clear title (ie., "Students for Affirmative Action," "Students Against Book Bans," or "Students for XYZ to speak on campus"). If you're crafting your own petition, make sure to include spaces for students to provide their name, email address, and phone number.

After preparing your petitions, place them on clipboards and gather pens. On the day of your petition event, walk around campus with your clipboard, asking students to sign in support of your cause. Be friendly and approachable, and if someone disagrees with your issue, use it as an opportunity to educate them about your perspective and viewpoints.

Inform supportive students about your chapter and follow up with all petition signers after the event. If your petition addresses a campus-specific issue and you collect enough signatures, consider submitting a copy to the Student Government Association and/or the school administration.

Forums & Debates With Students, Professors, & Local Leaders

Hosting a debate between students, professors, experts, and other local leaders is an excellent way to stimulate thought-provoking discussions on your campus.

First, choose your debate topic. Potential subjects include, but are not limited to: Steps to Strengthen Capitalism, The Importance of Liberal Internationalism in American Foreign Policy, Pathways to Affordable Healthcare, The Future of Criminal Justice Reform, & Ways To Reduce Inequality and Expand Opportunity.

Next, select your debate participants. Ensure that each side is equally represented by qualified individuals (ie. avoid professors debating students). Also select a moderator, which could be a student or professor.

Before the debate, establish the rules, guidelines, and structure. Communicate these details to all participants and ensure everyone agrees. If possible, involve representatives from both sides in the planning process.

Promote your debate using the “How to Organize a Successful Event” checklist provided in Handbook. If professors are involved, they might offer extra credit to students attending.

On the day of the debate, arrive early to set up the room. Ensure there are tables, chairs, and microphones for each participant, as well as for the moderator. Provide snacks and refreshments to draw attendees or if debate will be long.

Host Speakers on Campus

DFA does not yet provide a speaker network chapters can tap into to request big-name speakers to come to campus. In the meantime, chapters are free to invite any speakers they wish, provided that they are first approved by DFA HQ. The best types of speakers to invite are people who can speak to the importance of liberal values, progressive ideas, & understand the importance of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

We also recommend inviting educational speakers who have insight to give on a relevant topic or current event. Speakers who represent campaigns and/or people who are currently running for a political office will never be approved.

Before inviting a speaker, ensure your chapter's finances are in order. Consider the costs associated with the speaker's honorarium and travel expenses, as well as other event-related expenses like food, A/V equipment rentals, and advertising. For tips on fundraising and maintaining chapter finances, refer to the "Funding & Finances" section of this Chapter Handbook.

A complete overview of how to prepare for campus-wide events can be found in the "How to Organize a Successful Event" section of this Chapter Handbook. A summary of instructions is provided below:

Select a time and date that works well for your team. Check your school calendar to make sure your meeting doesn't conflict with a major campus-wide event. Pick a room that you know you can fill with people (bigger is not always better). Reserve the room a few hours before your scheduled start time so you and your team will have time to set-up. Block out at least one hour for event set-up.

Prior to your event, coordinate logistics with the speaker (ie. travel plans, A/V requirements, speaking fees, specific requests, etc). You'll also need to plan an agenda for your event and designate someone to introduce the speaker.

The most crucial part of preparing for your event is advertising. Follow the steps in the "How to Organize a Successful Event" checklist. Encourage each of your chapter officers to bring at least five friends.

On the day of your event, arrive early to set up the room. Make sure the DFA logo and branding are incorporated into the backdrop. Test all A/V equipment, including microphones, sound systems, and other tech checks. Collect contact information from every attendee, as events are excellent opportunities to connect with and recruit potential members.

When hosting a speaker on campus, DFA will assign a Field Director or Regional Director to oversee your event and support your chapter. The DFA staffer will ensure you utilize all the resources offered by DFA and help you stay on track.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Organizing events is a key component of your chapter's activities. Events can range from educational workshops and voter registration drives to tabling and activism projects. Planning an event can be a daunting task, but DFA is here to help! This checklist will take several weeks, so start your planning process early!

STEP 1: SET GOALS (6 – 8 weeks before event)

Ask yourself, "What do I hope to achieve?" Set ambitious, but clear and realistic goals that you know you can achieve. Involve your Field Representative early in the process. Meet with your officer team to answer the following:

- What's the purpose of your event?
- What do people, materials, and resources do we need to make this happen?
- What impact do you want your event have?
- What does success look like to you?
- How many people do you want to attend your event?

STEP 2: PLANNING, FUNDRAISING, & LOGISTICS (4 – 6 weeks before event)

Create a detailed plan that covers all aspects of the event. This includes logistics such as venue selection, scheduling, budgeting, and assigning responsibilities to team members. Meet with your officer team to do the following:

Discuss the event with your DFA Field Representative. Tell them your goals & where you need the most help.

Recruit a team of organizers (3 – 4 people) to help plan & execute your event.

- Doesn't have to be exclusively club officers. Give other chapter members a chance to take on leadership roles.
- Assign specific tasks (from this checklist) to each team member. Keep track by writing down each person's assignments and sharing it with them.
- Assign someone to oversee the event & ensure all tasks are getting done.

Develop a budget for your event. Be sure to account for:

- Rental fees & other costs associated with the venue
- A/V Equipment Rental Fees
- Food/Beverages
- Advertising (flyers, signs, online ads, etc.)
- Materials and Supplies
- Honorariums/Travel Expenses (if you're having a speaker)
- If you are planning to have speakers, **ONLY** invite them **AFTER** you get your chapter finances in order.

Develop a plan to raise sufficient funds. Avoid expenses that you cannot afford:

- Request funding from your school or Student Government Association (SGA)
- Apply for grants from DFA partner organizations or through your own research
- Reach out to local or state donors
- Apply for Dream for America Democracy Grants

Set a time & date for your event:

- Check your school's calendar & confirm that your event date doesn't conflict with major holidays or campus events.
- Pick a date that isn't too close to midterms, finals, or Spring/Winter break
- Make sure the date works for everyone by coordinating with key stakeholders who may be at your event (speakers, chapter officers, partner organizations and clubs on campus, etc).

If you plan on having speakers, invite them & confirm their attendance:

- In some cases, DFA will coordinate this for you.
- Confirm the details & deliverables for your speaker's participation.
 - How long will they speak? On what speak?
 - Will they answer questions from the audience?
 - Do you want to offer a meet-and-greet?
 - Do you want to have a photo-line?
- Confirm with the speaker if they require A/V equipment and/or plan to show slides or other visuals on screen.
 - If the speaker has slides or other visuals, ask them to share the file with you in advance so you can test on the day of your event.
- Ask the speaker for "day-of" contact information.
- Coordinate travel reservations (if necessary).

Reserve a venue:

- Pick a space that accommodates less people than you expect. Standing room only is always better than sea of empty seats.
- Pick a central, well-known location on campus.
- Request the space for at least an extra 90 minutes prior to your event start time so you and your team have time to set up and do tech checks.
- If you plan to offer food, be sure that the venue allows food in the event space.
- Submit A/V requests (mics, projectors, etc) to your venue (if applicable).
- Send room set-up requests to the venue coordinator at your school. Specify if/when you need the following: chairs, tables, easels, podiums, etc.
- Figure out a way to incorporate the DFA logo and branding into the backdrop/staging (ie. projecting the logo with a projector, using banners, etc).

Order food and beverages if you plan to offer them:

- If you order outside food, be sure your school allows food. Some schools may require student groups to order from on-campus or in-house catering.
- If food isn't being delivered to the venue, assign someone to go pick it up.
- Assign someone to buy or bring plates, napkins, cups, and cutlery.
- If your event is taking place in a theatre or auditorium, you may need to make a special request to have tables for food.

Develop an agenda for your event:

- Determine when doors will open & who will emcee or introduce your speaker.
- Determine if/when you and your team will make chapter announcements.
- Determine how you'll run any Q&A sessions (if applicable).
- Plan a time for a group picture.
- Plan a time for a reception, meet-and-greet, or photo line-up (if applicable).
- Share your agenda with your officer team.

If your event may be deemed controversial or will draw protesters, consider requesting campus security for your event. Ask your speaker(s) if they require security or if your school requires security in compliance with campus and local policies. Sometimes the school may not tell you that they require security until just days before your event. Security can be a large hidden cost, so be prepared.

Gather the necessary supplies and materials you'll need:

- Free DFA giveaways & merchandise (ie. stickers & rally signs for each chair)
- Chapter sign-up materials (every attendee must sign-in)
- DFA Logo & Branding Materials (posters, signage, & backdrop for the stage)
- Signage everywhere (doors, entryways, etc).
- Food and beverages, with plates, napkins, cups, and cutlery
- For additional branding materials (ie. photo walls with DFA logo, retractable banners, etc.) contact your Field Representative at least 3 weeks in advance.

Assigning team roles for the day of the event:

- Greeting and/or picking up the speaker
 - Even if your speaker is arriving directly at the event venue, designate an officer to greet and escort them backstage.
- Event setup
 - Place DFA rally signs and/or stickers on every chair
 - Setup the check-in/sign-up kiosk near the entrance
 - Setup a DFA informational table for attendees to learn more about your chapter, your values, & the work we do
- Welcome guests and attendees at the door
- Staff the check-in table & the DFA informational table
- Set up and serve food
- Broadcast your event live on all social media platforms
- Emcee the event and/or introduce the speaker
- Running the Q&A portion of your event (if applicable)
- Take pictures/videos to document your event
- Cleaning up and taking down signage afterwards

STEP 3: CONSISTENT ADVERTISING (2 - 4 weeks before event)

Create an event on Facebook/LinkedIn. Use Eventbrite or Partiful if you're planning on offering tickets for your event. Contact your Field Representative if you would like to add your event to DFA's national [Mobilize.us](https://mobilize.us) page:

- Include the event date, time, location, and other relevant details. Use Canva to create graphics (or request custom graphics from DFA if necessary).
- Invite all of your friends and classmates to attend the event.
- Ask your officers and members to invite all of their friends to attend the event.
- Email your members with a link to the event page. Ask them to RSVP.
- Share the event on all your chapter's social media pages.
- Ask like-minded student groups on campus to share the event.

Email your chapter members with weekly reminders. Email once per week to remind them of your upcoming event. Include a graphic with the date, time, and location, as well as a link to get tickets or RSVP. Encourage members to share your event with friends and classmates.

Incentivize each officer and chapter member to commit to bringing 5 friends. To be included in any incentives you come up with, each officer and chapter member must submit names, emails, and phone #'s for their confirmed RSVP's.

Reach out to like-minded student groups on campus. Invite them to attend and/or co-sponsor your event, which may lead to higher turnout. Ask them to email their membership, mention it at a meeting, & publicize on social media.

Ask professors to help publicize your event:

- Email the Political Science, Public Policy, History, Government, Philosophy, Economics, and other similar departments with a flyer and link to your event. Ask them to circulate it to their students & post it in their offices/classrooms.
- Ask professors who may have an interest in your event (Political Science, Public Policy, Government, etc.) if they would be willing to offer extra credit and/or encourage their students to attend.

Put up posters everywhere on campus. DFA will design and deliver posters for any event with an expected attendance of 100+. Hang up posters around campus on bulletin boards, walls, windows, inside classrooms, in the dining room, and in high-traffic student areas. Replace posters ASAP if they get taken down.

Create a promotional video to run ads with on social media platforms. DFA will produce promo videos for events with 100+ expected people. Contact your Field Representative about this at least 1 month in advance.

Chalk your campus with details of our event. Cover all high-traffic sidewalks, walkways, and popular student hang-out spots.

Hand out flyers and/or table. Hand out flyers with event details to students as they walk by. This becomes more effective as the event gets closer.

Ask your school or Student Government Association (SGA) to post your event on their calendar and/or TV screens around campus. Ask SGA for access to any and all promotion services they may offer.

Contact Greek Life and fraternities/sororities on campus. Offer to give out service hours to students who volunteer to help with your event.

Invite organizers from other DFA chapters in your area. If your school allows outside guests, encourage DFA members from other chapters to attend.

- Contact your Field Representative if you need help with contact information.

STEP 4: READY, SET, ACTION! EXECUTE YOUR EVENT (1 week before + day of)

- Send a reminder in the morning day-of to your chapter email list and contacts for like-minded groups.
- Personally text or DM each RSVP to confirm that they're attending.
- Arrive early with your team to set up your event space.
- Conduct tech checks & test all A/V equipment (ie. microphones, speakers, project quality, if slideshows or video files work, etc).
- Collect contact information from everyone who attends your event.
- Import sign-ups from your event to your chapter membership database.
- Takes as many pictures and videos of your event as possible. Post your best shots on social media and include them future announcements.
- Email all attendees to thank them for coming, include a call-to-action like following your social media pages or attending the next chapter meeting.



FUNDING AND FINANCES

START A BANK ACCOUNT

If your chapter plans to make several financial transactions (which most chapters do), it's important to set up a bank account for your group. **A dedicated chapter bank account will make it easier for your group to receive funds, pay for expenses, & responsibly and ethically manage precious chapter funds.**

Some schools have on-campus banks that will work with student organizations. If you're unsure, check with your Student Life/Activities department. If your school does not recommend any particular bank, feel free to go to a banking institution of your choice.

Most banks only require your group to have a chapter constitution, two co-signers (your treasurer and faculty advisor), and an Employer Identification Number (EIN) for your group which can be created here:

sa.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp.

You will not be allowed to use DFA's EIN number for your bank account. Be sure to make arrangements with your bank when you transition chapter leadership.

FUNDING FROM SCHOOL

Have you ever seen the "Student Activities" fee tacked onto your tuition bill? At most schools, students are required to pay a fee typically ranging from \$50 to \$500. The funds collected are usually directed to the Student Government Association (SGA), which then manages and distributes the money.

SGA's often oversee a funding application process where student groups can request financial support for events, initiatives, and special projects. DFA chapters should **ALWAYS** start the fundraising process by requesting money from your school or SGA. Don't pass up on this amazing opportunity!

Many other student chapters, including Turning Point USA chapters, have received \$50,000+ in funding from their school or SGA for just one event! Take advantage of this incredible resource and request funding from your school as soon as you have a team, vision, and plan for your chapter.

OTHER SCHOOL RESOURCES

Be sure to also take advantage of the many perks, benefits, and additional resources offered by your school or student government association that can help your chapter save money in the long run.

Some schools offer free printing; free poster board & arts and craft supplies; free equipment such as tables for tabling or AV-equipment for events; and countless other money-saving, cost-effective benefits to official student groups.

Contact your Student Life/Activities Department to find out what perks, benefits, and additional resources your school may offer.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION ACTIVISM GRANTS

Dream for America is proud to work with a number of partner organizations to offer even more additional support, resources, and grants to DFA chapters.

Blue Future

Blue Future, a project of the Youth Progressive Action Catalyst (YPAC) & the Progressive Leadership Initiative, offers grant and leadership development opportunities for progressive student organizers. Apply here:

ourbluefuture.us/get-involved/youth-power-fund-2024/

David-Putter Scholarship Fund

The Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund provides financial support for students who are active and emerging organizers in progressive movements for liberation, self-determination and social and economic justice in their communities. Apply here:

<https://www.davisputter.org/apply>

DEMOCRACY GRANTS

Dream for America offers “Democracy Grants” to fund our high school and college chapters, and other like-minded student groups. **Dream for America Democracy Grants range from \$100 – \$1,000.**

DFA grants can be used for supplies, bringing a speaker to campus, hosting an event, and more. To learn more & apply for a grant, visit: dreamforamerica.com/democracygrants.

For smaller grant requests (ie. pizza at chapter meetings), chapter leaders should contact their Field Representative who has a budget for small-dollar expenses. Small-dollar requests are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Tips for Getting Your DFA Democracy Grant Approved:

- **Be thorough.** Write a grant proposal outlining your project’s objectives, target audience, budget, and alignment with Dream for America’s mission. Show DFA that you’re organized and prepared for the event you’re trying to host.
- Thoroughly **explain your marketing plan:** show DFA how you’re planning to maximize attendance & spread liberal ideas to as many people as possible.
- Try to **secure additional funding** from other sources. Let us know if you already have funding from your SGA, your school, or another organization.
- **Submit your application early!** The earlier the better.

Fill out the Democracy Grant application form, attaching your proposal and any required documents. Apply today: dreamforamerica.org/democracygrants.

Your application will be reviewed by DFA’s National Organizing Department. We may contact you for additional information or clarification. If approved, you will receive the grant funds along with guidelines on how to report on the use of the funds and the impact of your project on your campus and community.

Securing a Democracy Grant can significantly enhance your chapter’s ability to make a meaningful impact on your campus. By carefully planning and executing funded projects, you can further DFA’s mission and inspire a new wave of progressivism across our country.

MANAGING FINANCES

Effective financial management is essential for the sustainability and growth of your chapter.

Here are some key steps to managing your chapter's finances:

Create a Chapter Bank Account

A dedicated chapter bank account will make it easier for your group to receive funds, pay for expenses, & responsibly manage precious chapter funds.

Create a Budget

Develop a detailed budget outlining expected income and expenses for the year. Include categories such as event costs, promotional materials, and administrative expenses. You can find a budget template on our website:

dreamforamerica.org/chapterbudgettemplate.

Track Income and Expenses

Keep accurate records of all income and expenses. Use a spreadsheet or accounting software to track transactions. This is important in case the chapter is audited by the campus, the DFA national organization, or other relevant entities.

Fundraising

Develop and implement fundraising strategies to generate income for your chapter. Consider hosting events, seeking donations, and applying for grants. Find more ideas for fundraising events on the next page.

Apply for Campus / SGA Funds

Many schools offer funding opportunities for student organizations. Research and apply for available funds to support your chapter's activities.

Financial Reporting

Regularly review and report on your chapter's financial status. Ensure transparency and accountability in financial management. It's important to remember your chapter is subject to audit by the Dream for America national organization or your campus administrators at any given time—keeping an accurate financial report is key to keeping the chapter in good standing.

GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING

In addition to securing resources from your school/SGA, DFA partner organizations, & DFA democracy grants -- **here are some grassroots fundraising ideas to consider organizing:**

Merchandise Sales

Sell branded DFA merchandise such as t-shirts, stickers, and buttons to raise funds and promote your chapter. Host pop-up shops at popular events or partner with local shops to reach a wider audience. Consider creating limited-edition items or collaborating with local artists for unique designs that will attract more customers and increase sales. **You may not design, offer, produce, or sell merchandise without receiving permission from the DFA National Team.**

Crowdfunding Campaigns

Launch online crowdfunding campaigns to solicit donations from supporters. Enhance your online crowdfunding campaigns by creating engaging video content that tells a compelling story about your chapter's mission and impact.

Benefit Events

Organize benefit events such as car washes and charity runs to raise funds. You can even take your benefit events to the next level by hosting themed bake sales with a twist, such as a cupcake decorating competition or a pie-eating contest. Consider partnering with other organizations to co-host larger-scale events for increased visibility and fundraising potential.

Grants, Sponsorships, & Campus Funding

Diversify your funding sources by exploring grants specific to your chapter's initiatives or projects and seeking out sponsorship opportunities. Take advantage of the plethora of resources at your disposal with funding from your school and SGA, our partner organizations, or applying for a DFA democracy grant.

Membership Dues

Consider implementing membership dues to generate a steady stream of income. Be sure the collection of membership dues is in line with campus policy.



FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS

ANSWERS TO YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When applying to register your new student group, your Student Government Association and/or student activities department may require that you answer a few questions about your new chapter. These questions may be asked on paper or in a face-to-face meeting. Either way, it's important to be prepared and know how to answer these critical questions. **Your answers could determine whether or not your chapter is approved.**

Every school is different, so if you're unsure how to navigate the process, feel free to contact your Field Representative. We're here to help!

Some frequently asked questions (and our suggested answers) below:

1. What is the purpose of your Dream for America chapter?

Dream for America's mission is to educate and mobilize students to promote liberal values on campus like the importance of diversity, economic opportunity, & our democratic institutions and the rule of law.

2. What kinds of activities would your chapter partake in?

Our chapter plans to engage in tabling, distribute educational literature, engage in face-to-face conversations, bring diverse speakers on campus, and host thought-provoking student forums and debates.

3. How do you know there will be support for your club?

Our chapter already has a list of [INSERT NUMBER] prospective members and [INSERT NUMBER] club officers. If approved, these students have signed-up and are ready to join our chapter and/or to lead the group.

*Ideally, you would already have a list of prospective club members from clipboarding or tabling. At the very least, you should have a list of dedicated club officers.

4. How is your group different & unlike other clubs already on campus?

Dream for America chapters are non-partisan and will never partake in campaign activities of any kind (such as campaigning for candidates, recruiting campaign volunteers, etc).

DFA also does not associate with any political party. We focus strictly on educating students on democratic values & showcasing policy differences with far-right conservatism.

Because of our policy-based approach and lack of affiliation with a political party, we are able to attract membership from a diverse range of students from different backgrounds. We believe it's important to offer an educational non-partisan group for students who are politically disengaged or hold independent and differing viewpoints. No other organization on campus is tabling every week to promote liberal values and defend democratic institutions.

5. What value will your club add to the campus?

DFA will offer a forum for diverse debate on campus, giving students a venue to engage in respectful discourse around differing worldviews and ideologies. We believe that students deserve a chance to hear from their peers on a wide range of issues that are impacting young people and their future, issues like: climate change, gun violence, economic mobility, the student loan debt crisis, affordable healthcare, and the rise of extremism and threats to democracy. DFA offers a safe-space for open-minded discussions on current events and topical public policy issues.

DFA will also offer unparalleled opportunities and scholarships for its members such as attending future national conferences where DFA will train students, engage in leadership building, & foster global citizens.

6. How do you ensure that your group succeeds after the first semester?

We've already identified [INSERT NUMBER] freshmen and sophomores who plan to be a part of our chapter for the remainder of their college career. Additionally, we plan to recruit new members on a monthly basis or even more frequently. These efforts, coupled with [INSERT NUMBER] dedicated club officers, our chapter is on a path towards success and sustainability.

Furthermore, Dream for America offers a wide range of resources to ensure that our chapter is built for long-term success. Including:

- Virtual training sessions for chapter leaders (includes leadership building, organizing support, and succession planning)
- Online & on-campus recruitment
- Support from trained and devoted DFA Field Representatives
- Physical chapter starter kit and additional online resources

7. How will your group be funded?

Dream for America's national team provides posters, banners, pamphlets, apparel, tabling supplies, and other materials. DFA also offers grants ranging from \$100 - \$1,000 for chapters. Additionally, your Regional Director has a budget from the national organization that can be used for various miscellaneous expenses such as food at your meetings, event advertising, and other costs.

We also plan to request funding from the Student Government Association to fund campus-wide events designed for the entire student body. Furthermore, we plan to self-fundraise through [INSERT IDEAS SUCH AS fundraisers, bake sales, etc].

8. What is your chapter's relationship with the national organization?

Dream for America's national team provides a wide range of resources to chapters such as free supplies, grants, custom graphics, staff support, and general guidance through resources like the Chapter Handbook. Our formal relationship with DFA is outlined in the Chapter Charter Agreement found at www.dreamforamerica.org/chaptercharteragreement. DFA does not require our chapter to participate in specific events or use specific materials. Our chapter has total autonomy in day-to-day decisions.

Visit for dreamforamerica.org/chapters for additional resources.

Dear Future Chapter Leader,

Thank you for taking the time to review our Chapter Handbook! This comprehensive document was developed to ensure an easy and inclusive process for chapter creation across all fifty states.

You are embarking on the **first steps** toward building a progressive network of democracy defenders on your campus and campuses across the United States.

It won't always be easy, but your passion and drive for promoting democratic values and countering fascism in your community will *shift the bar closer toward victory in America's culture war for progressive values.*

I'd like to thank my team for their support in creating the first edition of this Chapter Handbook.

Our team is available and eager to assist you in every step along the way, *always feel free to reach out—***we are here to help you succeed!**



Forward Together,
Nathaniel Pelton
National Organizing Director
Dream for America





DREAM FOR AMERICA

BUILDING A PROGRESSIVE TPUSA ALTERNATIVE

PO BOX 250975, PLANO, TX 75025

501(C)4 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

DREAMFORAMERICA.ORG