

AFFINITY GROUP HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Affinity Group Experience

Franklin & Marshall College offers a unique experience for each student, offering many opportunities for camaraderie inside and outside the classroom. Often, students maintain these strong links with their peers throughout their alumni lives.

Groups of alumni based upon common interest areas have always existed at Franklin and Marshall College. This document seeks to formally recognize, strengthen and enhance such associations. As such, there are many different ways for the Alumni Association to build support these organizations and help foster an ongoing connection between undergraduate students and alumni, enhancing the value of Franklin & Marshall for both.

The Franklin & Marshall Alumni Association has established an Affinity Group recognition program to support those organizations which help reconnect alumni with shared F&M experiences so they may network, socialize, support the College and otherwise continue their F&M 'education' beyond the four-year classroom experience.

B. Definition of Affinity Group

An Affinity Group (AG) is defined as an organization whose members shared in a central unifying activity or mission during their undergraduate years at Franklin & Marshall College who wish to continue to engage with each other and the College during their post-college lives.

Therefore, an inherent element of the AG's mission is to promote the welfare of Franklin & Marshall College and to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between the College and its alumni. The Franklin & Marshall Alumni Association encourages peer-to-peer interaction with the provisions delineated below, and formally supports the existence of Affinity Groups.

II. CREATING A NEW AFFINITY GROUP

A. The Process

1. Initiate contact with the Alumni Association Board or the Co-Chairs of the Affinity Committee who can assist you in forming a new Affinity Group.
 - a. Toyja Kelley '98 at fandm99@gmail.com or tkelley@tydingslaw.com.
 - b. Marc Persson'oo at drmpers@aol.com
 - c. Staff Liaison – Donna Pflum at dpflum@fandm.edu or 717-358-4266.

Action - obtain a list of names and contact information of alumni who have an interest and/or belonged to an Affinity Group as an undergraduate. .

2. Formation of the Affinity Group's core volunteer leadership
 - a. Establish a mission statement
 - b. Identify a leader who develops the committee
 - c. Develop a communications and recruitment strategy
 - d. Solicit input from Alumni Association representatives, Alumni Relations staff and/or Affinity Committee member(s).
3. Solicit input from established F&M Affinity Groups – see list of current F&M Affinity Groups in appendix C.
4. Affinity Group Electronic Visibility
 - a. Recommend the creation of Facebook page and designate an administrator
 - b. Once recognized insure that Affinity Group is listed as a recognized AG on the F&M College Affinity home page. Navigate to Affinity page from www.fandm.edu/alumni.
 - c. Continue fostering communications among affinity group members – examples include: creation of semi-annual newsletter to current members and prospective members, Facebook updates, marketing of on campus and off campus events.

III. Recognition Requirements

- A. A minimum of 25 members of prospective Affinity Group. Provide the College with a list of all members with their contact information which includes full name, address, phone and email.
- B. Formation of a Social Networking Website or a Communications Plan (See Section II, A, 4)
- C. Provisions may be made for those Affinity Groups who the committee deems deserving of recognition, but who do not meet the requirements for recognition. These "exceptions" will be decided on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the committee.

IV. Application for Approval

- A. Application for recognition (Appendix A). Application is completed and presented to a member of the Affinity Committee with all requirements attached.
- B. Franklin & Marshall Alumni Association Board Approval Process
 - 1. Application is vetted by the Affinity Committee.
 - 2. Affinity Committee presents recognition recommendation to the Alumni Association Board for vote of approval.
- C. Certificate of Recognition

V. AFFINITY GROUP ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

- A. Reporting Requirements
 - 1. Annual Report to Franklin & Marshall Alumni Association Affinity Committee.
 - 1) Provide yearly list of members with contact information annually
 - 2) Provide future 12 month schedule including events planned
 - 3) Provide recruitment plan to grow AG
 - 4) Provide ongoing communication plan
 - 5) highlight significant success AG has had with college and alumni
- B. Events

1. The Affinity Committee encourages recognized Affinity Groups to hold an on-campus event(s) each year. Most particularly to encourage members to gather on campus at Homecoming & Family Weekend.
 2. Special/Milestone Events – Alumni Association and the Office of Alumni Relations should be notified of upcoming milestones – 6 to 12 months prior to event.
- C. Foster a culture of philanthropy
1. Affinity Groups members are encouraged to support the College's Annual Fund.
 2. Promote engagement through community public service activities.
- D. Communication within the Affinity Group
1. AG leadership should plan and maintain a regular timeline of communication with AG members, the Affinity Committee and the College (Alumni Relations).
- F. Ongoing Principles
1. Adhere to College's policy in regard to the use of the College's name and trademarks.
 2. Refrain from discrimination within the AG.

VI. Responsibilities of Affinity Group Leaders

- A. Each designated affinity group leader will represent his/her group to the Alumni Association Board and be available for consultation when needed. In addition to other responsibilities related to their specific group, Affinity Group leaders generally will:
1. Advocate for their group through the Alumni Association Board's Affinity Group Committee.
 2. Continually identify and groom future leaders for the group by delegating tasks and responsibilities.
 3. Coordinate events for their Affinity Group with the Office of Alumni Relations, to ensure maximum promotion, impact and success.

4. Communicate information from the College and/or the Alumni Association Board that affects and/or will be of interest to group members.
 5. Attend periodic on-campus or remote training sessions to enhance and educate volunteer leadership.
 6. Be supportive of the College's annual F&M Fund, leading by example in encouraging 100% participation among involved Affinity Group members.
- B. The F&M Alumni Association Board and the Office of Alumni Relations will monitor the progress and adherence to mission of each recognized Affinity Group. Consistent noncompliance of an AG to meet their obligations may result in a suspension of recognition and privileges.

VII. COLLEGE AND ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SUPPORT FOR AFFINITY GROUPS

- A. Financial Support
 1. Request for Fund (RFF) **template attached**
 2. The College will have final approval of mailings to ensure that the content and style is consistent with overall College communications.
- B. Event Planning Support
- C. Website/Email Communication Support
- D. Create Opportunities for Public Recognition of Affinity Groups

VIII. AFFINITY GROUP RESOURCES

- A. F&M Website Affinity Group Webpage. Navigate to Affinity page from www.fandm.edu/alumni.
- B. Directory of Important Phone Numbers
 1. Leadership Training Opportunities
 2. Resource Directory to include a contact list of all Alumni Board members, Affinity Group Committee members, the Office of Alumni Relations and significant college staff and administrators.

IX. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Application for Recognition
- B. Request for Funds

APPENDIX A.

Franklin & Marshall Affinity Group Application for Recognition

AFFINITY GROUP NAME:

PURPOSE OF AFFINITY GROUP:

WHAT VALUE CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION PROVIDE TO COLLEGE AND THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION:

YEAR OF GROUP'S INCEPTION:

I, _____ [Affinity Group Leader], on behalf of _____ [Affinity Group Name], have read and agree to uphold the requirements for recognition and ongoing participation in Franklin & Marshall College's Affinity Group Program as set forth in the Affinity Group Handbook.

Signed _____

Representing _____

Date _____

Reviewed and Approved by _____

APPENDIX B.

Recognized Affinity Group Request for Funds

Name of Affinity Group

Leadership Contact or Contact for Request (please include name, email, and phone number)

Details of Request

Date and Time related to Request

How does this event support the mission of the Affinity Group

Communication Plan for Event

Anticipated Attendance

Total Budgeted for Program or Event

Notes or Additional Comments

Reviewed by _____ Date _____