

Slow Food On Campus

Chapter Handbook 2011-2012

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Introduction



Eat-In, Hamilton College '10
Photo credit: Eunice Choi

"Let's change the way we eat. Let's change the way we live. And let's change the way we treat each other"

Historically, young people in general—and students in particular—have been a force of social change. Students were and continue to be at the heart of social movements such as those for Civil Rights, LGBTQ Rights, Immigration Rights, Labor Justice, Environmental Justice and so on. The future of the food movement depends on leadership from today's young people—you!

Slow Food on Campus is a growing network of students and young people who **believe that slow food should be a universal right**. SFOC chapters across the country work towards a **better food system and a better world** where everyone—especially low-income communities and people of color—has access to good, clean, and fair food.

Student or youth leadership is at the heart of Slow Food on Campus. Started in 2006, Slow Food on Campus is about young people in colleges, culinary schools, grad schools, and high schools organizing themselves and their peers to transform food and farming. A core team of student leaders coordinates and facilitates decision-making about the group's goals and activities. Chapters are also encouraged to choose a staff or faculty advisor who is committed to student leadership and who can offer additional guidance.

SFOC Chapter Guidelines

- **Do work that advances Slow Food USA's vision of a food system that is good, clean, and fair**
- **Participate in online trainings for SFOC**
- **Be student-led and free to join**
- **Practice a commitment to diversity**
- **Hold elections for leadership positions**
- **Complete and submit the mid-year and end-of-year surveys**
- **Follow SFUSA's branding guidelines**
- **Keep a record of and comply with the Logo Use and Alcohol Agreements**
- **Register with the SFUSA national office and communicate with us**

How Slow Food USA Works

Slow Food USA's organizational structure is unique and powerful. There are 3 main bodies of leadership: Slow Food on Campus, Local Chapters, and the National Office.

Currently, there are about 45 SFOC chapters and 180 local chapters across the country.

The national office works to build community between all these different groups and mobilize the organization as a whole.

Our organizational model is an example of interdependent leadership—defined as individuals or teams working together towards a common goal, with each person taking on responsibility for part of the group's activities.

Interdependent leadership is important because it allows us to strategize, make decisions, and build power at and across multiple levels.

For example, SFOC and local chapters decide what change they want to see in their community. At the same time, the national office is able to coordinate all these grassroots efforts, to provide strategic focus, common purpose and shared resources in order to create larger-scale change. As an organization, we aim to work as a team of leaders. **We believe that successful movements are led by a multiplicity of small groups working together, bringing their best thinking and creativity to the table.**



Slow Food USA Goals:

- **Build** community and leadership for a diverse food movement
- **Organize** local projects that create concrete change
- **Transform** national food policy, such as the Food and Farm Bill

We can achieve our goals by focusing on our “ABCs”—the basic building blocks of a better food system:

- **Access** to good, clean, and fair food for low-income communities
- **Biodiversity** in our regional food ways
- **Children** having healthy relationships to food

Transforming Food & Farming

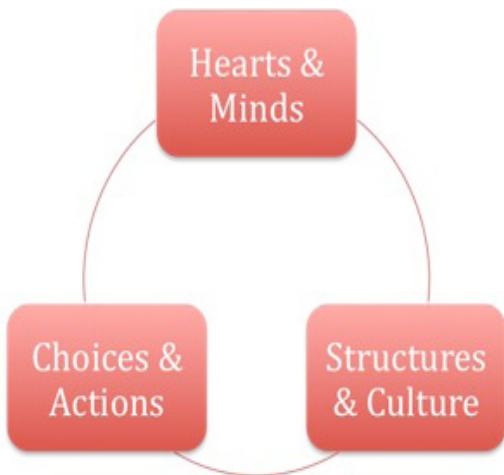
We believe that transformation is different ways of creating change happening together.
There's no one way to do Slow Food work.

"Everyday people make change every day. When we organize, we make history."

Slow Food means many different things to many different people in the Slow Food network—but if there's one thing that we can all agree on, it's that we need to transform food and farming. In general, there are 3 ways that everyday people are creating change everyday in the name of Slow Food:

Changing people's hearts and minds: SFOC chapters host a bunch of events that educate and inspire people to join Slow Food. For example, they host community meals, film screenings, discussion events, and visits to local farms and farmers markets.

Changing people's choices and actions: Chapters provide opportunities for people to learn new skills and start new practices. They rally young people to cook and eat together, to grow food at a community garden, and to start buying food that is sustainably and ethically sourced.



Changing structures and culture: Campus chapters challenge the broken food system both by reforming it and building alternatives to it. Chapters are working with their schools to change how it sources its food. They are also changing on-campus food culture by starting up farmers markets, gardens, CSAs, and food co-ops to offer a different model of growing, distributing, and enjoying food.

No one way of creating change is better than the others. We'll need as many people as possible engaged in all forms of change to transform food and farming.

The beauty is that no matter what form of change we feel inspired to lead, we can all work together. The paths to transforming food and farming are limitless. **DREAM BIG and LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

Campus Power

As students and young people, you have the power to define the future of food and the future of the food movement. We believe in you!

Power comes from our relationships with people. **When we build power, we are inspiring and inviting more people to choose and commit to creating change towards a shared vision.** The more people we can get to commit to action, the more resources we have to influence decisions and affect change.

Slow Food work is about organizing people to build power, because we believe that everyday people who are impacted by the food system—including low-income communities and people of color—can leverage their own resources into the power they need to create change. SFOC grew out of the belief that young people—and students in particular—are powerful forces of social change.

Chock it up to the frenzy of new, mind-blowing ideas zipping around campus. Call it a phase of hopeful idealism before “the real world” and cynicism kicks in. Describe it as a symptom of having too much time to think and not enough real responsibilities. Whatever it is, let’s honor young people for standing up for a better world. Asking the hard questions. Providing fresh insight. And yes, when necessary, challenging the status quo.

There are 38 million students on college, culinary, and high school campuses across the country. That’s 38 million potential food movement leaders. 38 million young people who might be inspired by Slow Food. So...



Northeast Food 'n Justice Summit '10
Photo credit: Eunice Choi

How are we going to build campus power for a better food system and a better world?

Slow Food USA has over 250,000 supporters, 25,500 members and 225 chapters. Take advantage of this network and work with us. Here’s how the national office supports SFOC chapters to build power:

- Chapter support from a full-time staffer
- Campus Beet, a monthly e-newsletter
- Access to Leader Exchange, an online community designed for Slow Food leaders
- Flyers for tabling and outreach
- Resources for local projects
- Conference calls to share best practices
- National campaigns that engage young people
- Featuring SFOC stories on the SFUSA blog
- Official SFOC chapter logo and email address

Running a successful chapter

We've got a lot of work cut out for us. Are you ready? Here are some things to consider to make the most of your chapter.

Core Leadership Team

Leadership is defined as taking responsibility to create the conditions for others to achieve a shared purpose when faced with uncertainty. Starting a SFOC chapter and doing Slow Food work is new territory. You'll need a committed group of leaders to guide everyone towards success. While only a number of people may have a formal leadership position in your chapter, it's important to realize that everyone has something to contribute. The role of the core leadership team is to enable everyone to bring the best of themselves to doing Slow Food work. This includes building up potential leaders—people who are good team players and are willing to invest time, energy, and ideas to advancing your chapter.

A core leadership team works best when they represent a diversity of life experiences, skills, and perspectives. That said, you don't want diversity for diversity's sake. Similarly, you don't want more leaders just for the sake of it. The purpose of growing leadership should be to support more members or more work. A good rule of thumb is 1 leader for every 5 members. It gets awkward when there are more leaders than members.

Developing a Mission Statement

You're repping your chapter at the student organization fair and someone asks you to sum up what your group does in 30 seconds. What do you say? A good mission statement offers a snapshot of your group's intentions and inspires others to learn more. It's a clear and concise way to express your group's:

Shared purpose--What are you all coming together to do? What is your intended impact.

Constituency-- Who are the people you hope to organize or engage?

Activities--How will you achieve your shared purpose?

Your chapter's mission should resonate with everyone in your chapter. It should also promote and be aligned with SFUSA's vision of a good, clean, and fair food system. As a group, try to create a mission statement that follows this general format: We are organizing/engaging (**constituency**) to do (**shared purpose**) by (**activities**).

For example: We are organizing with local high school students from low-income families to create access to good, clean, and fair food in their neighborhoods by hosting monthly meals that connect farmers and folks from the community and starting a community garden.

Running a successful chapter

Setting SMART Goals

Once you've got a mission statement that everyone can agree on, set some goals and make them SMART:

Specific. Measurable. Attainable. Relevant. Time-bound.

Specific

Do you ever find yourself in a group that's confused about what exactly you're trying to accomplish? Constant confusion isn't cool. That's why we need specific, well-defined goals. Specific goals are easier to bite off and chew and they help everyone be on the same page. If you set a general goal like "change the food system"—it's hard to get a sense of what you have in mind as the outcome of your work. Ask your group:

- What are some concrete things we want to change? What's the scope?
- Why is achieving this goal important?
- Who is involved/affected?
- Where/when is this all happening?

Measurable

Don't forget to measure progress towards achieving your goals. Establishing markers and milestones will help your group stay on track and reaching them will help you feel re-energized. Ask your group:

- What does success look like?
- How can we measure our impact with numbers?
- How can we assess the quality of our efforts?
- What can we learn from assessing our progress?

Attainable

There's no point in trying to do the impossible. Your goals should be both achievable and aspirational. Once you've identified what you can do and would like to do, ask your group:

- How can we achieve this goal?
- What are the skills resources we need?
- What skills and resources do we have?
- If we don't have certain skills and resources, how can we build them up or partner with others who do?

Running a successful chapter

Relevant

Your time and resources are valuable—so use them wisely. Prioritize and focus on goals that are relevant to your group’s mission—your constituency, shared purpose, and activities. Ask your group:

- Is this goal aligned with our mission?
- Does it support the change we are trying to create?
- Does it promote Slow Food USA’s vision?

Time-bound

You can rally your group to reach the finish line by committing to target dates and a deadline. Establishing a time frame will remind your group of the commitment you’ve all made to creating change. Ask your group:

- By when should we have reached this goal?
- What marker/target dates should we set along the way?

For example, this is not a SMART goal: Offer cooking and gardening workshops to high school students.

This is a SMART goal: 50 high school students participated in at least 3 cooking and gardening workshop developed and facilitated by a core team of 5 chapter members at XYZ community center by summer 2013.

Notice how the SMART goal is written as an achievement and not as a task. It’s both fun and important to frame goals as achievements because that’s what we intend them to be!

Strategizing

An effective strategy can help you turn your goals into achievements. It’s the path to get from where you are to where you want to be. In general, here are some questions to consider when creating your strategy:

Who should be involved in the strategizing process?

Who should we work with? Who can help us get what we want?

How do we inspire others to get involved?

How can we support people who are already involved?

How do we get funding?

How can we ensure that decisions are being made by those who should be making them?

Who’s doing what to carry out the strategy?

Running a successful chapter

Who are all the stakeholders—people who will be affected—and how should we communicate with them? Given our chapter’s members, capacity, and strengths and weaknesses, what can we do? What should we do? How far can this strategy take us? What are the key moments? Do we need more than one strategy to get the work done?

There are many paths to the same point, so don’t stress about doing it “the right way” or following a formula. It’s helpful to glean lessons from past campaigns and social movements but recognize that things have changed and will continue to change. Be creative. Be flexible. Be open to a range of possibilities and don’t forget to evaluate and re-evaluate your strategy (your general approach) and tactics (the steps in your strategy) at key moments. Identify what worked and what didn’t—and learn from it going forward.

Recruiting and Retaining Members

Our organization is about people and people power! The more people we inspire and engage, the stronger we are and the more we have to contribute to the food movement. There is no magic formula to growing and strengthening your membership base, but here are some tips to consider for recruiting and retaining members:

Recruiting—a.k.a. inspiring people to join

- Don’t be afraid to keep asking people to join!
- Emphasize community/relationship building and social events.
- Show people what slow food is. Don’t tell. For example, host an interactive event such as cooking or gardening. Organize community meals/potlucks. Share food samples at tabling events.
- Create different ways for people to get involved.
- Offer benefits and resources to members—such as a newsletter or t-shirt.
- Reach out to first and second years.
- Advertise in different ways (word of mouth, posters, facebook, text, email, etc.)
- Send “slow food representatives” to different student groups like dorms, sports team, student clubs, etc.
- Talk to professors about giving extra credit to students who attend an event.
- Get some press from your campus newspaper by pitching stories or writing an op-ed.
- Invite questions about slow food.
- Share your own personal story about why you joined.
- Solicit feedback from folks who attend events or sign up on your mailing list about what they’d like to see and then act on their ideas if possible.

Running a successful chapter

- Retaining—a.k.a. engaging members who have already joined
- Listen to what your members want. Ask them via survey or a conversation.
- Create teams/committees that enable members to invest in and contribute to the chapter's success.
- Build strong relationships and open communication between leaders and members.
- Have a retreat every semester or every year.
- Have members take turns facilitating a meeting.
- Set SMART goals, have fun reaching them, and celebrate successes by thanking people for their efforts!
- Organize trips to conferences where members can learn new skills and ideas.
- Establish a mentor system (i.e. seasoned members pair up with new members to discuss key food issues)
- Have small group discussions at meetings to deepen relationships between members.
- Encourage SFOC members to become a student member of Slow Food USA—so that they can receive national membership benefits. Email membership@slowfoodusa.org for more info.

Building Up Leadership

The most effective leaders enable others to lead with them. Think about how you can inspire others and how you can support them in building up and/or deepening their leadership. Again, there's no magic formula here, but you might consider these best practices:

- Recognize that everyone is a potential leader.
- Respect the diversity of backgrounds, skills, and perspectives that people have to offer to the group.
- Identify potential leaders and intentionally build relationships with them. Remember that leaders take responsibility for the entire group so be on the look out for people who are strong team players and good listeners. Leaders don't dominate conversations—they provide focus for a diversity of voices.
- Have ongoing discussions about what leadership is.
- Encourage folks to reflect on their own leadership style, strengths and weaknesses.
- Listen to people and see what they need to be better leaders.
- Connect folks with leadership training opportunities.
- Encourage folks to take up leadership roles on committees.
- Promote a culture with positive and constructive feedback is a norm.
- Establish a transition model where incoming leaders can be guided/mentored by outgoing leaders.
- Recognize people's contributions with awards and/or appreciations.
- Solicit feedback from potential leaders about what kind of support they want and need.

Running a successful chapter

Finances

Money. Money. Money. There's no doubt that we need it—but how do we get it in a way that is aligned with our values and vision? It's a big question—and one that many organizations at the campus, community, national and international levels face. Here's our 2 cents (get it?) on how to get that green:

- Be creative!
- Host an action or event and ask people to sponsor students who participate. For example, you can challenge students to do a “fast food” fast (no fast food for a month) and have people give money for every day a student participates. Walks and runs are also great ways to fundraise.
- Fundraise during holidays and other times that you know people are likely to be in a generous spirit.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for pay-what-you-can donations at each event.
- Identify all funding sources on campus (i.e departments and alumni funds) and seek sponsorship/grants
- Ask community organizations about local or state grants.
- Offer to help out at a church/temple/mosque in exchange for a percentage of the weekly collection.
- Earn money by catering food at campus events—if possible.
- Charge a \$5 cover for slow food community meals and do this monthly!

If your chapter plans to receive donations and/or issue payments (for example, honorarium to guest speakers or rental fees for an event space), it’s important to consult with your school administration to see how you should account for this flow of money or resources. As registered student groups on campus, SFOC chapters operate under the legal tax status of their universities.

To clarify, Slow Food USA’s 501(c)3—our non-profit status—does not support SFOC chapters are legal subsidiaries. There is a reason for this. Becoming a subsidiary of a non-profit takes months and having your own EIN Or Tax ID number means that you will have to file taxes independently with your state and federal governments. In our experience, this produces an overwhelming administrative burden on SFOC chapters without many benefits. EINs are meant for groups that last more than 4 years. If your group doesn’t file taxes for 4 years straight, your group will be “folded”—which isn’t pleasant for all parties involved—including you and us.

That said, there is a precedent for SFOC chapters starting their own 501(c)3 non-profit organizations. However, since “Slow Food” is trademarked, these non-profits have formed under a different name. To sum up, as long as your SFOC chapter is affiliated with Slow Food, you can start a non-profit organization but your chapter itself cannot be a non-profit organization.

Running a successful chapter

Slow Food Branding Guidelines

As SFOC leaders who have the privilege to speak and act in the name of Slow Food, we have an individual responsibility to be accountable to the whole. We should all be mindful about how we are representing Slow Food. This means that we act with integrity. It also means that we follow guidelines for using our logo. The more consistently we use our logo, the more recognizable it becomes to others—which is super helpful for advancing our vision and work.

We strongly recommend that SFOC chapters check out and abide by the branding guidelines—which you can find on the SFOC webpage. The names “Slow Food”, “Slow Food USA” and the snail logo are all registered trademarks of Slow Food International (SFI)—an international organization of which Slow Food USA is a part. Given this, the national office is in charge of monitoring the use of the Slow Food logo in the U.S. This is why we ask that all SFOC chapters sign the Logo Use Agreement before they are officially recognized as a chapter.

Your student chapter is authorized to use the words “Slow Food” only as part of your student chapter name, in your printed materials, and in the promotion of Slow Food USA and Slow Food on Campus initiatives and programs. You are permitted to use the chapter logo and @slowfoodusa.org email address provided, which incorporates the Slow Food name, in your printed and electronic materials, but it must be used with the same font and logo and cannot be changed. In the case your chapter has a special need to use the Slow Food USA logo, you must secure special authorization from the Slow Food USA national office. Use of the name for personal or business purposes is strictly forbidden. The right to use the names and logos can be revoked by Slow Food USA at any time for any reason.

We encourage you to think of these guidelines as a tool for making sure we’re speaking the same language. For example, many chapters have expressed interest in using an acronym for their school. However, since many schools have the same acronym, it might be confusing as to which chapter is which. To respect your chapter’s unique identity as well as others’, we ask that chapters refer to themselves by their “full” name as much as possible. There are over 225 Slow Food chapters—local and SFOC—and this is the fairest (and funnest) way we could think of to differentiate between chapters! While it won’t make us very happy, chapters that do not follow guidelines will have their statuses revoked.

FAQs

If I have a question, who should I contact at the national office?

You should contact a staffer at sfoc@slowfoodusa.org They will be able to answer your question or direct you to someone else who can offer a better response.

Does the Slow Food USA national office provide funding for SFOC chapters?

No. In general, SFOC chapters receive funding from their schools and/or fundraise on their own.

How can I connect with other SFOC chapters?

A list of active SFOC chapters is available on the Slow Food on Campus page of the Slow Food USA website. Simply click on the chapter name and you'll be redirected to their website, which should include contact information for the chapter.

How do SFOC chapters partner with other youth and campus groups in the food movement?

SFOC chapters are encouraged to reach out and build alliances with a diversity of campus and community groups that work with young people and that have a stake in changing the food system!

At a national level, SFOC has a relationship with groups such as Real Food Challenge, Unite HERE's Stir It Up Campaign, CoFed, Live Real, and Student Farmworker Alliance.

Is being a part of SFOC different than being a member of SFUSA?

Being a part of SFOC gives you access to trainings, resources, and action opportunities developed by the SFUSA national office. While we require that SFOC chapters allow people to join for free—to enable students from all economic backgrounds to join—SFOC chapters are in charge of their own membership model.

In comparison, you are a SFUSA member if you make a monetary donation to the Slow Food USA organization. Once you donate, the national office connects you to your local chapter (the one closest to you). SFOC members are encouraged to contact membership@slowfoodusa.org regarding student memberships to SFUSA. We also encourage SFOC member to join the SFUSA mailing list.

FAQs

What's the difference between SFOC chapters and local chapters?

SFOC chapters and local chapters are both part of the SFUSA network but they function differently. For example, SFOC chapters operate on campus while local chapters operate in the broader community. Additionally, unlike local chapters, SFOC chapters are not a subsidiary of Slow Food USA's tax exempt 501c3 non-profit. Rather, as student organizations, SFOC chapters generally fall under the tax exempt status of their schools. Another big difference is that members of local chapters pay to join.

How can SFOC chapters work with a local chapter nearby?

Several SFOC chapters work closely with local chapters. Since many local chapters engage youth through their school and community initiatives, partnering up is both a great opportunity for SFOC members to connect with peers and other young people and for local chapters to support student leadership. To get in touch with a nearby local chapter, go to www.slowfoodusa.org homepage and click on the “Local Chapters” tab.

Who are Slow Food USA regional governors and what do they do?

There are 20 Slow Food USA regional governors who are a select group of former local chapter leaders. Because they have a lot of knowledge and expertise to offer, governors are responsible for organizing local and campus chapters in a certain U.S. region and can act as a resource for you. To get in touch with your regional governor, visit www.slowfoodusa.org, click “Contact Us”, and find “Slow Food USA Regional Governors”.

What's the SFOC Annual Report?

The SFOC Annual Report documents all the work that SFOC chapters have done in a year based on responses to the mid-year and end-of-year surveys. It is compiled by the SFUSA national office and shared with SFOC leaders in June of each year.

Slow Food on Campus is a program of Slow Food USA.
Contact sfoc@slowfoodusa.org for more info.

