



ssdp

students for sensible drug policy

How To Start an SSDP Chapter On Your Campus

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

1623 CONNECTICUT AVENUE NW, SUITE 300

WASHINGTON, DC 20009

PHONE: (202) 293-4414

FAX: (202) 293-8344

E-MAIL: ssdp@ssdp.org

SATELLITE OFFICE

1406 HUDSON AVENUE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124

PHONE: (415) 875-9463

FAX: (415)875-9463

E-MAIL: ssdp@ssdp.org

WEB: www.SchoolsNotPrisons.com

BLOG: www.DAREgeneration.com

This guide is designed to provide you with the information you need to quickly start a recognized SSDP chapter at your school. We understand that students are busy and that's why we've developed this guide to help make starting a chapter easier and less time consuming.

Achieving school recognition is important because it allows you to use university space for meetings and events and to apply for funding. Your school's student activities board or student government should be able to provide you with the necessary steps toward becoming recognized. You may also be able to find information about starting a new club or organization on your school's website. This process varies from school to school so its important to understand your school's requirements.

Your chapter can hold meetings before receiving school recognition, but accomplishing the following steps quickly and effectively will allow

1. Contact SSDP's National Office

The first step you should take in starting an SSDP chapter is to contact SSDP's national office. SSDP has 3 outreach directors working specifically to help you start and run an effective chapter. Fill out our Chapter Startup form at <http://www.ssdp.org/chapters/start> and you'll be contacted shortly by an SSDP outreach director.

SSDP outreach directors can answer any questions you might have about the organization and forming a chapter. Our staff would like to get to know you so that we can better assist you in getting started on campus. SSDP is a unique organization in the sense that our staff members are always available to provide you with advice, guidance, and materials!

2. Find Students Interested in Organizing the Chapter

Some schools will require that you have a minimum number of students willing to participate in the group in order to begin the recognition process. This is the fun part! Discuss SSDP with your friends and classmates and find a handful that are willing to help you organize the chapter.

After you speak with one of SSDP's outreach directors, they will send you a chapter starter care package containing SSDP promotional items such as bookmarks, stickers, and other eye catching items! Set up a table in a high traffic area and use these materials to get noticed on campus.

- Build an email list! - *This allows you to easily contact students about meetings, campaigns & events.*
 - Download SSDP email sheets at <http://www.ssdp.org/resources>
 - Set up a listserve using Google Groups or other software <http://www.groups.google.com>
 - Give away items as thanks for signing up (candy, condoms, stickers, etc)
 - Send your forms to SSDP National to earn points to trade in for goodies!
<http://www.ssdp.org/points>
- Host a first event! - *Students are more likely to show up to an event rather than a recruitment meeting.*
 - Find movie ideas at <http://www.ssdp.org/resources/booksandfilms>
 - Find speaker/event/game ideas at <http://www.ssdp.org/resources/speakers>
 - Raise a little money to buy some pizza and advertise FREE FOOD!
 - Advertise using [Facebook](#) and paper flyers. If allowed, table tents in dining halls work great!

3. Find a Faculty Sponsor

Your school may require your chapter to have a faculty sponsor. Don't fret! You may already have a faculty member in mind for this. If not, it's a good idea to approach faculty involved in departments such as criminal justice, sociology, and political science. Use these talking points to help:

- SSDP neither encourages nor condemns drug use but seeks to promote policy reform.
- SSDP has more than 150 chapters at schools across the U.S., Canada, UK, and Australia.
- SSDP involves students in the political process and brings unique discussions to campus.
- Explain SSDP's mission/values statement found at <http://www.ssdp.org/about>

4. Draft and Submit a Chapter Constitution

Some schools will require that you submit a constitution for the chapter. A constitution explains the chapter's voting process, officer terms, and other bylaws. SSDP makes this step easy for you! Visit our resources page at <http://www.ssdp.org/resources> and download a sample constitution that you can modify for your chapter. There is no need to create an elaborate constitution, just meet the university's standards. You can also ask other organizations on campus to have a look at their constitutions for other examples.

5. Attend an SSDP Orientation Call

At this point, we'll provide you with dates and times to attend an SSDP Orientation Conference Call. These monthly conference calls are an opportunity for you to meet SSDP's entire national staff and at least one national board member. We will do our best to answer your questions about the organization, including an overview of the many services the staff provides for your chapter. You'll also get to meet many other students from across the country who are leading SSDP chapters.

Visit <http://www.ssdp.org/orientation> to schedule your call.

6. Keep the Staff Updated

Let the SSDP staff know how your efforts are coming along. If you run into any complications, have questions, or need advice, don't hesitate to call! Once you have completed the recognition process outlined by your school and your chapter has been approved, be sure to contact one of our outreach directors and let us know!

And with that, you'll be added to the chapter map as an official SSDP chapter!

Be sure to check out our more extensive Student Organizing Manual once your chapter has achieved recognition. The S.O.M. outlines in detail how to recruit members, get noticed on campus, hold meetings, host events, and become an effective leader. You'll also find guides on lobbying, working with the media, using Facebook, and SSDP's campus change campaign all in one place:

<http://ssdp.org/resources/guides/>