

PACE UNIVERSITY

Alumni Association

ALUMNI **AFFINITY GROUPS** VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



ALUMNI AFFINITY GROUPS

Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to the Pace University Affinity Groups program! The Affinity Groups are part of the larger Pace Alumni Association. Formed in 2021, the Alumni Association creates a space for alumni to engage with each other, current students, and the University in order to enrich the alumni experience. Alumni will build community, celebrate Pace, and share innovative ideas to move the University forward. Through programming and volunteer opportunities, the Association provides a home for alumni where they can support and strengthen affinity to the University.

Overview

What is an Alumni Affinity Group?

An Affinity Group is a group of alumni who engage and connect around a common interest, identity, or purpose. Affinity Groups are charged with providing a forum where diverse experiences, perspectives, and resources can be shared with anyone who is interested. Each Affinity Group will work closely with Alumni Relations to facilitate events, networking opportunities for alumni, and engagement opportunities for student groups.

Through an Alumni Affinity Group, you can connect with alumni, students, faculty, and staff members who enjoy similar passions, professions, identities, and personal interests. These Groups provide opportunities for alumni to engage with each other through a variety of events and programs and build community around their shared experiences. Examples of these opportunities can include happy hours, topical presentations by Pace alumni or staff, networking events, and community service outings.

This handbook provides further details and requirements for the establishment of Affinity Groups and their ongoing support from the Alumni Association.

Why Have an Alumni Affinity Group?

The goal of an Affinity Group is to build Setter connections between alumni with shared interests, experiences, identities and communities. These are “ground-level” groups and they would not be possible without you! Additionally, an Affinity Group:

- Creates a medium through which alumni can reconnect with each other around shared experiences
- Increases opportunities for alumni to get involved and meet other Pace alumni and students
- Promotes leadership
- Fosters a sense of community within the Pace alumni population
- Supports a culture of philanthropy for the University

There is a strong connection between the Affinity Groups and the University. The Office of Alumni Relations has a dedicated resource to support the Affinity Groups and their programming.

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How Are They Structured?

While the Affinity Groups are typically based in the New York City area, alumni from all over are welcome to participate and to serve on the committees.

Each Affinity Group will be managed by a volunteer leadership committee consisting of a chair and, ideally, two additional volunteers such as a communications chair and an events chair. The committee is charged with creating and developing programming on a yearly basis.

Expectations

The Alumni Association has established the following expectations for an Affinity Group and its leadership:

- **Committee Volunteers**
 - The Chairs will work with the Alumni Association staff to identify volunteers to serve on the leadership committee and who will help with programming. Additionally, the Group leadership and the Association staff will work together to promote the Group and its events. Volunteers on the leadership committee are expected to attend the committee meetings, held via Zoom, and participate in the programming as much as possible. Meeting schedules vary from quarterly to bi-monthly, depending on the Affinity Group.
- **Programming**
 - Each Group will confirm its yearly programming schedule at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1). Types of events to consider include a social event, a presentation/network event, a student engagement event, a holiday event, or a community service event. There is room for each Group to scale up its number of events based on alumni interest and participation.
 - The Group's leadership committee will serve as coordinators in planning, communicating, and hosting the events in partnership with the Alumni Association, which will provide promotional and logistical support as needed.
 - Events should not overlap with major annual University planned events - e.g., Homecoming Weekend, Reunion, and the annual holiday party unless previously approved. See [events calendar](#).
- **Membership Maintenance**
 - The Groups should actively recruit more alumni to engage and identify potential leaders.
- **Leadership**
 - Each Affinity Group Chair will serve on the Alumni Association Leadership Council and participate in its quarterly meetings.
- **What Affinity Groups Can Expect from the University**
 - Event promotion including email communications, website listings, social media.
 - The creation of a registration form and payment portal (if payment is required for your event).
 - Budgetary support as determined.
 - Additional items that may arise .

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Programming and Planning for the Leadership Committee

Before the Event

1. Block important dates and keep in mind the University's master calendar of events to avoid conflict.
2. Create a shortlist.
3. Diversify your programming (remember the social event, the networking event, and the third event of your choosing).
 - a. Think about other tastes.
 - b. Evaluate gathering goals.
 - c. Consider the setting.
 - d. Don't forget the kids! Age is just a number... except when it's not.
 - e. Decorations/food/drink needs.
 - f. Strive for accessibility and inclusion.
 - g. Piggyback when possible.
 - h. Pencil in some event dates.
4. Assign ownership and set your schedule by the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1).
5. Define the details.
6. Get the word out.

Preparing the Event

Work with the Alumni Association staff contact to assist with any logistical needs including securing a location, setting up and tracking the registration, and promoting the event. It's important to consider the timeline leading up to the event as promotional opportunities require substantial lead time.

During the Event

This is the fun part! You get to enjoy all your work and attend your event. There are some things to keep in mind to ensure a successful and smooth event.

1. Arrive early to set up and prepare the registration area.
2. Welcome and greet attendees - name tags are a great way to facilitate this important step.
3. Keep track of the schedule.
4. Make an announcement!
 - a. Suggested talking points:
 - i. Introduce yourself.
 - ii. Describe the work of the Group
 - iii. Additional pertinent announcements including any follow-up to the current event.

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After the Event

In order to track the guests who attended, please keep careful registration/sign-in records. Follow up with the Alumni Association staff contact to inform them of the final list so our office can update our files and make sure everyone is included in your Group's future events.

Getting the Word Out

The Alumni Association will assist with communicating with alumni to inform them of your Group and invite them to participate in your programming. There are several marketing opportunities in place including website postings, the events calendar, e-mail blasts, social media placement, and our online newsletter (all managed by the Office of Alumni Relations).

Affinity Groups are encouraged to make use of social networks, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to connect with alumni and to disseminate information about upcoming activities. It is essential to proactively monitor your Group's online presence.

Facebook Guidelines

1. Establish a clear "chain of command" for administering your Group's Facebook group.
2. It is a good idea to keep the Facebook group private.
3. Appoint a moderator (or moderators) to manage the page. This role can be undertaken by the Group chair or delegated to other volunteers.
4. Ensure that Group information is up-to-date and accurate.
5. Review and control posts and shared content.

Use of the Pace Logo

Pace University has specific rules around branding and content. All events should be branded accordingly. Group chairs will work with the Alumni Association staff contact to ensure proper use of the Pace logo.

Affinity Group Code of Conduct

As participants in Pace University's Affinity Groups, you are considered an official member of the University community and are held to the same standards of ethics and conduct as students, faculty, and employees as defined in the [University's Guiding Principles of Conduct](#). This extends to all Group events and online presences, such as Facebook groups.

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Resources

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