



## Reference Manual

# Choose Sleep Interest Group

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Additional  
resources

**AASM**  
American Academy of  
**SLEEP MEDICINE™**

## ABOUT THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF SLEEP MEDICINE

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) is the only professional society dedicated exclusively to the medical subspecialty of sleep medicine. As the leading voice in the sleep field, the AASM improves sleep health and promotes high quality patient centered care through advocacy, education, strategic research, and practice standards. Established in 1975, the AASM has a combined membership of 10,000 accredited member sleep facilities and individual members, including physicians, scientists and other health care professionals.

“Board-certified sleep medicine physicians provide care for one-third of human life, a critical third that has direct impact on every aspect of health. By transcending the traditional organ-based boundaries of medical disciplines, the field of sleep medicine allows the specialist to provide comprehensive care that can dramatically improve patients’ well-being and quality of life.”

— M. Safwan Badr, MD, Wayne State University



# What is a Choose Sleep Interest Group?

A Choose Sleep Interest Group is a group of like-minded students interested in cultivating a career in sleep medicine and spreading awareness of the importance of healthy sleep. A Choose Sleep Interest Group's mission is to foster medical student interest in sleep medicine clinical care and research; provide opportunities for community outreach; and motivate aspiring physicians to become sleep medicine specialists.

## This group can serve as a mechanism to

- Facilitate medical student experiences with clinical care and research of sleep-wake disorders
- Provide structured mentoring for medical students, with opportunities to network with sleep medicine faculty and fellows
- Engage in community outreach to promote awareness of healthy sleep
- Organize programs to increase medical student awareness of sleep medicine with the intention to recruit applicants to sleep medicine training programs

## Highlights of a Choose Sleep Interest Group

### Starting a Choose Sleep Interest Group allows you to:

#### Gather Students Interested in Sleep

Choose Sleep Interest Groups are for all medical students interested in sleep medicine, just like you.

#### Work with Campus Life

This opportunity allows students to utilize their campus structure to network and rally around the interest of sleep medicine.

#### Raise Awareness

Establishing a Choose Sleep Interest Group helps you reach new people and encourage your community to engage in the discussion of healthy sleep.

#### Have Fun

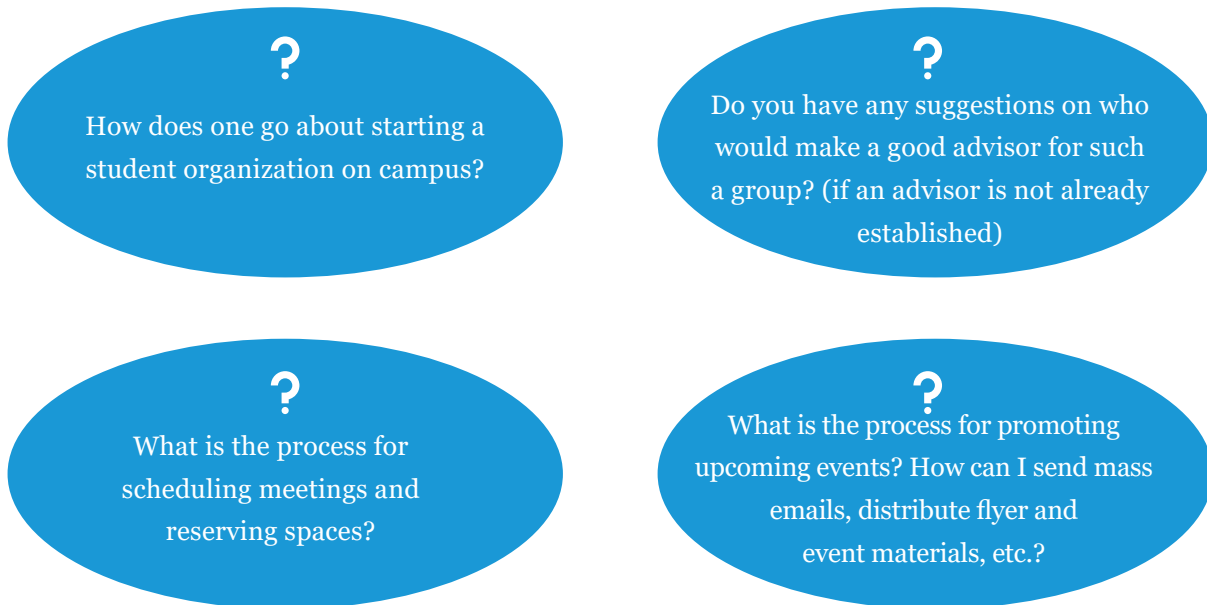
The structure of a Choose Sleep Interest Group gives you an opportunity to host fun events while helping your community and meeting new people.

# Establishing a Choose Sleep Interest Group

## Campus Resources:

When starting the process of establishing a Choose Sleep Interest Group on your campus, it is important to follow the campus protocol for establishing a student organization. You can start by setting up a meeting with your student affairs office to ask questions and get a better understanding of rules and regulations to which you will need to adhere.

Below is a list of questions to consider for the meeting:



## Funding:

As part of the start-up process, you will need to establish some way to manage funding. Most medical schools will have a standard way to help you manage this, whether it be by setting up a bank account or sourcing the funding through the school. It is crucial that you work with your school to establish this process. The AASM will provide each qualified Choose Sleep Interest Group with a small stipend for start-up costs. The process to obtain these funds is outlined in the Choose Sleep Interest Group application.

## Leadership:

The group will need a strong faculty advisor. The ideal candidate should be a sleep medicine specialist or faculty member who has the time, energy and enthusiasm to help lead the group. Additionally, the group will need at least 1-2 students who are willing to take on a strong leadership role to get the Choose Sleep Interest Group up and running. It is also important to contact any of the Chairs of Departments related to sleep to let them know that the group is in the process of being created and invite them assist or attend/speak at a meeting.

# Planning Your First Meeting

Below are some tips to assist with the planning of your first meeting, here are some suggested tips:



Establish a method of communication with the group. Make sure to communicate the time, date and location of the meetings through that method. If possible, attach a registration or attendance tracker with this to help anticipate participation and ensure you have enough materials available. Some suggested communications tools include Google Drive or a private Facebook group.



Decide on a duration for your meeting and stick to it. We suggest keeping your meetings to a time limit of 60-75 minutes.



Depending on the time of your meeting, have snacks and water available for attendees.



End each meeting with action items to follow up on by the next meeting. Always make sure to announce information regarding the next meeting or event, and encourage attendees to engage others with the group.



# 20 Programming Ideas to Get Started

1

Choose Sleep Interest Group Introduction Meeting

2

Kick off social event with sleep medicine faculty

3

Overview of sleep medicine session

4

Sleep clinician and researcher panel

5

Sleep medicine fellow and graduate student panel

6

Sleep medicine clinic shadowing

7

Tour of a sleep lab/facility

8

Lunch with sleep medicine fellows

9

Community/campus outreach activities during orientation or finals week

10

Lunch lectures on interesting cases

11

Sleep medicine game night – jeopardy, trivia, bingo

12

Presentations at local elementary, middle, and high schools about healthy sleep

13

Organize a healthy sleep awareness activity on campus

14

Patient and speaker presentations on sleep disorders

15

Research in sleep medicine discussion

16

Presentation/discussion on career opportunities

17

Participate in the AASM Mentor Program

18

Get involved in a local research opportunity

19

Meet and greet with sleep medicine specialists

20

End of year social event with faculty

# Publicity and Networking

The intention of a Choose Sleep Interest Group is to bring together people who view sleep medicine as a field of interest and people who want to learn more about the effects of sleep on their patients. As a Choose Sleep Interest Group grows and evolves, it is important for the group to develop a plan for outreach and recruitment. There could be several programming opportunities that take place outside of the general meetings that allow for community interaction. These types of events help provide exposure for the group and could lead to growing involvement in the organization.

## Activities

Student groups can host a variety of engagement activities to spread awareness, such as:



Kick-off events at the beginning of the year to encourage engagement



Game nights where you utilize different sleep education facts and activities to promote sleep health



Campus-wide specialty lectures or webinars on various sleep topics



Site visits to surrounding sleep centers to experience the sleep field first-hand

## Publicity

Depending on your campus size and regulations, there are a handful of ways you can publicize your organization. Some ideas to get you started include:



Sending out campus-wide emails or place flyers in student mailboxes to promote events (if your campus allows it)



Attending campus-wide activities that give you an opportunity to promote the group



Utilizing social media as a channel to promote events



Thinking outside the box! Ask others to have a brainstorm session to come up with new, unique events



# Volunteering



## Volunteerism

A good place to start when looking for volunteer opportunities would be to see if your school has clinical volunteer opportunities. This will give your Choose Sleep Interest Group members experience working with patients and practicing various skills. Your Choose Sleep Interest Group can also look into having a booth at campus-wide health fairs or organizational fairs. Alternatively, you can reach out to other interest groups to partner with and volunteer at their activities.

Similarly, there are a plethora of different community-based opportunities to explore off campus, such as local charity walks, runs, and drives.

## Mentoring

Choose Sleep Interest Groups also provide volunteer opportunities for those outside of the group by providing faculty an opportunity to mentor students. These opportunities can come in the form of shadowing, research assistance, and large-group discussions, as well as one-on-one mentoring opportunities.

To help foster faculty/student mentoring, we suggest talking to the department chairs to see if they have experience in mentoring or know anyone that does. From there, you can host networking events, residency fairs, or panel discussions with mentors to connect with students.

# Best Practices for Success



## Leadership and Logistics

You can find resources to create and organize a successful Choose Sleep Interest Group at [aasm.org/choosesleep](https://aasm.org/choosesleep). First, create bylaws and a constitution to outline the procedures for the group and make sure all functions are covered. These may also be required by your institution in order to receive funding, reserve spaces, or participate in campus events. Make sure to designate leadership from each class to build a pipeline of leaders and ensure the groups viability over multiple years.

For your meetings, it is best to plan ahead. When organizing a meeting or event, you will want to consider the type of room you're in, whether or not you will need audiovisual equipment, the amount of tables/chairs needed, and sound barriers. If you are ordering food, make sure to place the order well in advance and take any dietary restrictions into consideration. Be sure to be mindful of trash locations in the space, too.



## Communicating Goals

As with any group, communication is key to success. Creating and communicating annual goals with the group helps assure all participants are on the same page and moving in the same direction. These goals should be short-term, obtainable, and cyclical. Developing an online communication tool and a binder of printed, important information will help ensure that the group stays on track from meeting-to-meeting. It also helps leaders pass on group information and job duties year-to-year.





## Outreach

Reaching new members is particularly important when just starting out. To reach a wide audience, it's best to use a variety of approaches. Connecting with different interest groups on campus, as well as using social media, posting flyers and passing out information at campus events will help ensure your group reaches a larger audience. Make sure your Choose Sleep Interest Group considers programming for different levels of interest. Some folks may just want general sleep medicine information, while others may already be very serious about a career in the sleep field, so plan accordingly.



## Connect with the AASM

The AASM is one of your best resources as you move forward. Use your complimentary AASM membership to stay connected to the latest information in the sleep field by reading the online journals and emailed weekly updates.

You can also visit [aasm.org/choosesleep](https://aasm.org/choosesleep) for more information specific to students.

# Additional Resources for Leaders



## President's to-do list:

- Identify a faculty advisor and key students for leadership
- Create bylaws, constitution, and goals
- Submit all paperwork to student affairs to become an official organization
- Connect with the AASM to submit paperwork
- Create a meeting and programming schedule
- Promote meetings and events



Utilize the Choose Sleep website at [aasm.org/choosesleep](https://aasm.org/choosesleep) for information relating to student resources and membership.

**CHOOSE**   
sleep

INTEREST  
GROUP