

# CHAPTER SUCCESS GUIDE: ROLE OF THE CHAPTER ADVISOR



There's no one right way to advise an Active Minds chapter. Some chapter advisors are very hands-on, attending most meetings and events, working closely with the executive board, and taking an active role in advocating with administrators or other stakeholders. Some advisors are very hands-off: meeting with a few members of the executive board once or twice a term, signing any forms needed for budget requests or space reservations, and being responsive to questions or concerns from chapter leaders.

The right balance is for chapter leaders and advisors to decide and might vary term to term but, for all advisors, we recommend some of the following elements are involved in your role:

- Meet with or otherwise openly communicate with the chapter executive board.
- Help navigate the university processes and policies for space reservations, budget requests, or other needs.
- Aid in the leadership transition process to assure smooth chapter operations year-to-year.
- Mediate concerns or issues that arise within chapters or among chapter members or leaders.
- Support students in setting goals for growth, programming, fundraising, and more.

## Who should be an advisor?

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- A chapter advisor can be any faculty or staff person employed by the school. Here are some potential avenues to find an advisor. Counseling, Guidance, or Health Center staff (like counselors or other clinicians), health promotions people, health educators, and administrative staff.
- Faculty with a background or academic interest in mental health like Health, Psychology, Social Work, Nursing, or other “helping profession” fields.
- Other school professionals with a vested interest in student mental health such as Admissions Counselors, Academic Advisors, First-Year Experience Coordinators, Student Retention Officers, etc.
- People with lived experience or personal interest in mental health. Mental health affects everyone, not just one area of study or type of background. Think about faculty members or staff that you and your peers interact with who have been supportive of student mental health or have shared their own experiences, and think about all of the unique things someone with a different background might bring to your chapter!

## Co-Advisors

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Active Minds highly recommends you investigate the possibility of having two (or more) advisors to help balance the responsibilities associated with the role, build close partnerships with other student organizations, faculty, and departments, tap into additional expertise and experiences, and to avoid concerns about dual relationships between counselors and students. Just as your leadership team might grow and shift depending on the needs, expertise, and time commitment needed of your chapter’s executive board, check in with your students throughout the year to see if your role in the chapter needs to shift or there are other ways you can support their success.

# Resources for Chapter Advisors

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Chapter Advisors receive regular communication from the Active Minds National Office both alongside your student leaders via Chapter Newsletters and emails to their leadership team, and specifically in your role as advisors. Be sure that the contact information for all advisors and students is up-to-date by [completing this form](#).

## **SOME OF THE OTHER RESOURCES SPECIFICALLY FOR CHAPTER ADVISORS INCLUDE:**

- Monthly emails from the Active Minds National Office with updates, resources, and tips.
- A channel (dedicated space) for advisors to network, ask questions, and give suggestions to other Chapter Advisors on [Slack](#). *Once you receive the email invitation to join Slack, after completing the form, direct message an Active Minds national staff person (indicated by a username that ends with “\_nationalstaff”) to be added to the private advisor channel.*
- Direct support from the Active Minds National Office via email ([chapters@activeminds.org](mailto:chapters@activeminds.org)) or during video-call [Office Hours](#).