



Region Chair's Guide

Congratulations! You've been elected by your peers to represent your region to the AMA-MSS. So the question I'm sure is running through your mind is: what exactly do I do, and how do I go about doing it?

And so, your GC is providing you with this guide. It is intended to give you a little insight as to your position and what it entails. It will also provide you with resources to help you throughout your term. This guide is by no means complete, and the contents are not meant to be limiting. We encourage you to be innovative – you sought this position with goals and ideas, and we look forward to seeing those take shape over the coming year. This guide is also ever-changing; if you think something should be added, removed, or changed, please let us know.

Once again, congratulations, and good luck!

Contents

Regional Structure Background 3

Regional Officers and Duties 4

National Meetings – What to Expect..... 5

Region Meeting Planning..... 7

Other Opportunities and Resources 9

Online Resources 10

Staff Contact Information 10

Sample Agenda for the National Meetings 11

Regional Structure Background

In 2000, the AMA evaluated a call for increased student representation in the House of Delegates. AMA Board of Trustees Report 19 (I-00) designed a means for selection of student delegates, establishing the MSS Regional structure as a means to “provide an opportunity to select student delegates from a geographic Region, without being dependent on individual state student market or membership numbers.” This report defined the seven AMA-MSS geographic Regions as follows, each with a roughly equal number of medical student members.

Region 1: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington (WAMI), Wyoming

Region 2: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin

Region 3: Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas

Region 4: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee

Region 5: Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia

Region 6: Delaware, District of Columbia, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia

Region 7: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont

Of note, this report described the MSS Regions as “a communication unit for the MSS, and schools within a Region collaborate to strengthen MSS participation and promote activities within their Region. This Regional structure allows the strengths of individual state or school MSS groups to compliment each other, and facilitates peer interaction between established MSS groups and newly developing ones.”

The MSS reaffirmed the role of Regional chairs in 2003 by asking the MSS, through Regional Chairs:

- (1) to continue to encourage the organization of Regional conferences as effective mechanisms of increasing communication among its members;
- (2) to continue to encourage the development of local MSS chapters and state MSS sections in medical schools and states where they do not exist;
- (3) to involve highly organized MSS chapters and state sections in providing organizational information and assistance to developing chapters and sections;
- (4) to encourage MSS chapters to maintain communication and interaction between medical student members and physician members of county and state medical societies; and
- (5) to endorse the maintenance of active and timely communication between MSS delegates and Regional Chairs

Moreover, the MSS added a new leadership role within Regions at A-04, suggesting that each Region elect or appoint an International Health Policy Committee Regional Chair.

Regional Officers and Duties

These are meant to be guidelines; they are a compilation of the different Region bylaws and are intended to give you an idea of the varying duties of the regional officers. Refer to your Region's bylaws for specific duties. The **only required position is that of Region Chair**; other officers may be elected as deemed necessary by the regions and their bylaws.

Region Chair

- Serves as the representative of the Region to the AMA-MSS.
- Maintain communication with the MSS GC.
- Responsible for planning the Region business meetings occurring at Interim and Annual.
- Responsible for planning at least one Region meeting annually.
- Appoint a region meeting coordinator.
- Disseminates information to their respective region. (You will receive many e-mails from the GC or other MSS representatives. It doesn't take long to forward that information along to your region, but it's recommended that you delete the evidence of it being a forwarded message to encourage recipients to not automatically delete said e-mail.)
- Attend monthly Region Chair conference calls.
- Maintains their respective Region listserv.
- Maintains up-to-date contact information for the state and chapter chairs within their region. (The Annual, Interim, and Region meetings are excellent places to update this information—just pass around a sign in sheet and ask people to designate if they hold a chapter/state chair position)
- Must be familiar with their region bylaws. (Your GC will be!)
- Should be familiar with *Sturgis*, or whatever parliamentary authority your region adheres to. (*Sturgis* is an excellent resource, aside from parliamentary procedure, it has a sample meeting agenda, description of officer roles, sample minutes, etc.)

Region Vice Chair (if applicable)

- Assisting the Chair in his/her duties.
- Taking minutes of meetings (if there is no secretary present).
- Serving as parliamentarian (if no parliamentarian is appointed).
- Assume the duties of Chair if the Chair is unable to complete their duties.

Secretary

- Taking minutes of meetings.
- Maintain the region Web site.
- Maintain the region listserv (if not being done by the Chair)

Treasurer

- Maintain Regional finances.
- Assist Region meeting coordinator with fundraising for region meetings.

State Officers (may or may not be official region officers)

- Serve as representative of their state to the Region and MSS GC

International Health Policy Committee Liaison

- Serve as a liaison between the International Health Policy standing committee and the region, facilitating exchange of information and communication.

Regional Delegates and Alternates

- Serve as voting delegates for their state in the AMA-HOD.
- Act as a medium through which relevant information and events of the HOD can be disseminated to their regions.

National Meetings – What to Expect

This section will give you an idea of what to expect at the Interim and Annual meetings, as far as things that must happen during your business meeting. Other items may come up, and if so, your Speakers will inform you ahead of time.

Much of this section has to do with what elections will be held at any given meeting. A few general rules of thumb for elections:

- 1) Allot each candidate an equal amount of time, generally along the order of 2 minutes.
- 2) Pass out ballots during the roll call, so that you can be assured that the proper number of ballots have been distributed.
- 3) Ask other candidates to step out of the room during candidate speeches, and have all candidates remain out of the room while ballots are being counted (unless those individuals counting ballots do so outside of the room).
- 4) Hold nominations and elections sequentially if people are allowed to drop down into another election.

Interim (November)

Before the Meeting

- Solicit applicants for Convention Committees (deadline is generally 2 months before the meeting).
- Solicit applicants for Regional Delegate and Alternate Delegate – make sure they know that they have to have all application materials in on time!

Regional Delegate Elections (a few caveats)

- The process for doing this can be found in your Region bylaws.
- Candidates will be required to submit a completed Application and CV to the Department of Medical Student Services by the published deadline each year to be kept on file by DMSS. (Candidates who do not have their application materials in on time are *not eligible* to run. Once elections have ended, if there are open slots left, you may defer to your regional bylaws for the designated procedure for filling those available positions.)
- To be eligible for election, a medical student member must receive written endorsement from the state medical society on whose delegation he or she would be seated if elected to the position of delegate.
- Each state is entitled to a maximum of one delegate, unless there are fewer candidates than available positions. A state may have an unlimited number of alternate delegates.
- All election disputes will be referred to the Governing Council.

Chair Elect and Trustee Elections

The tail end of your region meeting will be interrupted by candidate speeches for Chair Elect and Student Trustee. Generally, candidates are allotted 5 minutes in each region (less time if there are more candidates) – this is strict and moderated by a member of the rules or parli pro committee, but you are free to do what you want with those 5 minutes. You will be notified of the specifics by your Speakers prior to the meeting.

As an aside, plan to have the regional business nearly done by the time candidate speeches start, there is not always time between candidates to continue region business.

Upcoming Application Deadlines after Interim (December/January deadlines)

- 1) AMA Foundation Leadership Award (December)
- 2) AMA Councils (end of January)
- 3) AMPAC Board Member (end of January)
- 4) AMA Foundation Board (end of January)
- 5) Government Relations Advocacy Fellowship (end of January)
- 6) Liaison Committee on Medical Education (end of January)
- 7) National Board of Medical Examiners (end of January)

Other things to consider

- Is anyone from your region planning on running for Governing Council at Annual? You might want to solicit this information, or encourage people to apply.
- Don't forget about AMPAC Student Lobby Day and the National Advocacy Conference coming up in March!

Annual (June)

Before the meeting

- Solicit applicants for Convention Committees (deadline is generally 2 months before the meeting).
- Solicit applicants for Regional Officer positions.

Regional Officer Elections

As per your bylaws, it's a good idea to start soliciting interest a few months ahead of time to give people a chance to contact the current Exec board and find out what their jobs entail.

Candidate Elections

The positions being elected at this meeting are: Vice Chair, At-Large Officer, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Speaker, and Vice Speaker. Again, the tail end of your region meeting will be interrupted by candidate speeches. Generally, candidates are allotted 5 minutes in each region (less time when there are more candidates) – this is strict and moderated by a member of the rules or parli pro committee, but you are free to do what you want with those 5 minutes. You will be notified of the specifics by your Speakers prior to the meeting.

As an aside, plan to have the regional business nearly done by the time candidate speeches start, there will not likely be time between candidates to continue region business.

Upcoming Application Deadlines after Annual

- 1) Standing Committees (July)

Other things to consider

- Is anyone from your region planning on running for Chair or Trustee at Interim? This would be a good time to encourage people to apply.
- Make sure to pass along any information to your successor, remember how it was when you first got elected, any help is much appreciated!

Region Meeting Planning

This is pinnacle of your term as a Regional Officer. Planning a meeting is no small task, so here's all the resources we could find to help make it a little bit easier!

Did you know that you're eligible for \$1000 from the AMA to put towards the region meeting? All it takes is filling out one simple form 60 days prior to your region meeting. You can find all the information you want in the Region meeting planning guide, complete with a sample proposal, flyers, registration forms, agenda, etc. and located at:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/12951.html>

You can find the meeting proposal form at:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/12950.html>

Also, don't forget to invite an MSS GC member to your region meeting—it's required for you to get your funding. All you need to do is send an invite 30 days in advance!

Here are some previous Region meeting themes to get you thinking:

"Disparities in Health Care"

"The Well Rounded Physician: Ethics, Activism and Personal Health"

"Student Debt: Recovering our Losses"

"Patients, Physicians, and Providers: A Three-Pronged Approach to Identifying and Improving Problems in Health Care"

"What can the AMA do for you, and what can you do for the AMA?"

"The Art of Medicine"

"The Physician as Advocate: Beyond the Clinic"

More previous region meeting information can be found at the various region Web sites located at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/11554.html>

For information on having a community service project at your region meeting, contact your At-Large Officer.

Who can you contact for more information?

- 1) Katherine Torres, MSS Program Administrator – katherine.torres@ama-assn.org
- 2) Your GC Liaison

The following tips are from your friends in Region 3:

How to Plan a Regional Conference – The Compendium

Authors: The Co-Chairs of the 2004 AMA-MSS Region III Conference in Houston, TX
Lindsay Botsford, Scott Chalet, and Chirag Patel

1. Numero Uno – Develop conference letterhead! Then using this, create your standard donations form. You don't need to purchase a template – you can make your own simply using MS Word.
2. Business Cards – Early and Lots. Many cheap deals via the web (www.vistaprint.com)
3. Set up a yahogroup and yahoo (or other) email service. Communicate

4. Fundraising – First, appoint ONE person to be the fundraising head. One of the three Conference Co-Chairs was our fundraising guru. Having him keep track was, in our opinion, much better than delegating to a committee. Start early, way ahead of the conference (like 5 months ahead) and be frequent with your requests to all sources of funding. Use your “yes replies” as leverage in all future letters, especially neighboring hospitals. Hit up all teaching hospitals! Don’t ever be discouraged – expect to get 10 NO’s for every 1 YES. Request donations at various funding levels and give those levels names applicable to your conference them (e.g. Leader-Level: \$50-\$249, Advocate-Level: \$250-\$499, Trailblazer-Level: \$500+). You can count on \$1000 from the AMA if you fill out the proposal form online, which entails having a flyer, schedule, and budget. We turned in VERY rough drafts early on so that we could have the money in hand early on. As part of the deal, you need to include time for a GC member to speak, and then invite them by sending a letter to Katherine Torres at AMA (katherine.torres@ama-assn.org).
5. Publicity – Don’t underestimate the power of personal phone calls! Really make sure your publicity chairs work hard, push people! CALL THEM! Get whatever lists you can, and CALL THEM EARLY...we suggest six weeks. Get the hint? Have many people meet on a weekend (free cell phone minutes) to do a barrage of phone calling.
6. We aren’t sure about the usefulness of the “School Packets” sent out. We sent out fliers, transportation info, and business cards to one contact. Just make sure that the contact you send the information to at each school will actually disseminate the information.
7. Having last year’s conference attendees list. These are students who have already attended a Region Conference, and would probably be more likely to attend yours than the average medical student.
8. Committee Chairs – We had three committees (Logistics/Transportation, Publicity/Registration, and Social/Hospitality) filled with five people. We used applications and think that this was quite helpful to find a higher level of commitment. If your conference is in September or October, try to do this (filling the chairs) before the end of the current academic year (i.e. by April/May).
9. Money – Start a new bank account as to not mix chapter money. Both of our schools contributed \$500 to the conference account. As it turned out, a last-minute donation enabled us to refund this money back to our respective chapters, but both of our chapter boards felt it a good investment/down-payment to our city’s conference.
10. Web site – It was a lifesaver! Online registration ROCKS! Get this set up early. <http://www.bcm.edu/osa/amatma/beyondtheclinic/index.htm>
11. AMA Region Meeting Planner – It’s a document on the AMA site and quite helpful: <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/6978.html>
12. If you are CO-hosting, spend some time at the onset to plan your meetings. In the first few months, every other week worked. Then the committee chairs started joining us. Then in the last 6 weeks leading up to the conference, meet REGULARLY for 1-2 hours every week. Stick to the same day/time/location for continuity/regularity. Even if you don’t think you need to meet, MEET – things will come up.
13. Katherine Torres, at the AMA-MSS office is a great resource for help with the conference. She can provide lists of Annual and Interim meeting attendees, committee members, as well as nametags and a nametag template. E-mail her to get on the right track (katherine.torres@ama-assn.org)
14. Make the decision of whether or not you want to coordinate students to be overnight hosts so people can save on hotel rooms. We chose not to do that since we had a large number of people in Houston, transportation is difficult to our location, and we did not have the manpower of interested people since so many already host interviewees. It is potentially nice to offer if you can make it happen.

Other Opportunities and Resources

Region Committees – a chance to build leaders within the region (plus some people to divvy out responsibility to). Some examples of committees other regions have had include: Legislation/Advocacy; Community Service; Membership; and Fundraising.

Committees can serve any purpose you wish them to. If you have an idea and you think there are a group of individuals that would help to facilitate this, form a committee. Send out e-mails to your region list serve soliciting information. Distribute this through your state and chapter chairs, and have people reply to you if interested. Appoint a committee chair whom you trust to make sure the committee stays on task.

For random committees, form them anytime. If you think a committee should exist for the entire year, form them shortly after your election, or shortly after the school year starts so that first years can get involved. Remember that committees not only help you get work done, but they also provide a stepping stone for members to become actively involved!

Region Task Force – looking to revamp the region? Region 7 set up a task force to identify areas of improvement within the region, investigating fundraising possibilities, a regional buddy system, a regional newsletter, etc. If you have a problem that needs addressing within the region, gather a group of motivated individuals to investigate the issue!

Region Buddy System – every region will have strong chapters, and those that are just coming about. Why not form a system where chapters are paired. This could be for sharing information and ideas, or collaborating if you have nearby chapters that could do joint events. Try out whatever type of buddy system (if any) you think would best benefit your region.

Fundraising – there are lots of ways to fundraise within the region. Some regions have requested donations from each chapter; others have solicited hospitals or their schools for funding support. Solicit your county medical society, state medical society, or if you're not entirely opposed, you can even go as far as trying to find a drug rep to contribute. I'd also recommend contacting the other region chairs to see what they did for fundraising.

Chapter Development – the region meeting is a great time to let people get to know each other, why not let some chapters shine? A few ways to do that – let chapters give short presentations on projects they've done in the past year, or rather break into small groups hosted by those schools where they can share how to go about with a similar project.

Region Listserv – most regions should have a yahoo group listserv, or some other listserv available for dissemination of information. Use this resource! Keep the list updated (easy to do by passing around a sign in sheet at national/regional meetings and let people indicate if they're interested in being added to the listserv. This is a great resource to let people know about upcoming deadlines, meetings, MSS events, or pass along the myriad of e-mails you'll receive from your GC.

Region Web site – each region has a region Web site available from the MSS homepage (<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/11554.html>). This is an underutilized resource. You can post information regarding your region meeting, update your bylaws, store contact information for state and chapter officers, and whatever you can dream up. If you want to update the Web site or post information, your point person is Keith Voogd (keith.voogd@ama-assn.org)

State and Chapter Chairs – these people are your allies, they can help you with information dissemination and as fellow leaders in the MSS, and they are often able to offer quite a bit of information and advice. We recommend regular contact either via e-mail or brief phone calls to keep in touch and make sure the communication lines remain open.

Contacting people is difficult. This is when you must resort to sneaky tactics such as personalized e-mails, phone calls, or repeated e-mails. State and Chapter chairs are most in tune with the happenings of the region at their level, and they should be serving a liaison role. Make sure you establish good relations with these individuals – face time at meetings, frequent phone calls, etc. They will be your biggest allies.

Your GC Liaison – USE US!!! We'll contact you shortly after your election (and ours) once we've been assigned regions. We're here to help you get all the information you can't find on your own, bounce ideas off, help connect you with other resources, and much much more. Just ask!

Online Resources

MSS Homepage – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/14.html>
MSS Regions – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/11554.html>
Region Planning Guide – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/6978.html>
Region Meeting Proposal Form – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/12950.html>
MSS IOP's and AMA Bylaws – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/123.html>
Applications and Deadlines – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/109.html>
Meeting Dates – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/28.html>
Governing Council – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/385.html>
Councilors and Liaisons – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/1673.html>
Writing Resolutions – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/1575.html>
Resources for Chapters – <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/13015.html>

Staff Contact Information

Katherine Torres – katherine.torres@ama-assn.org
Region meeting planning, chapter involvement grants, MSS membership resources, Annual/Interim Meeting information, MSS listservs

Keith Voogd – keith.voogd@ama-assn.org
MSS policy, resolution writing, GRIP/GRAF, Lobby Day, Web site updates

MSS Outreach Program Staff – student.membership@ama-assn.org
Recruitment information, membership status, chapter commissions, multi-year incentives (Stedman dictionaries)

Call to Order

Roll Call

Introductory Remarks

Approval of minutes – (insert most recent meeting here)

Regional Officer Elections

Chair

Vice Chair

Discussion of time and location for next Region meeting

Introduction of students in leadership positions - updates.

State Reports: State Chairs

AMPAC update

Discussion of Resolutions

Your Region

Other resolutions

New Business

Upcoming application deadlines

Upcoming meetings

Other announcements

Candidate Interviews: 3:30 PM

Adjournment