



Want to start your own NSCS Chapter?

**A Comprehensive Guide
For Getting a New NSCS Chapter Started**

A note from Holly:

Hi there! My name is Holly Barclay and I am an NSCS member just like you – since 2013! I served as a chapter president during my time as a music therapy student at the University of Louisville and learned so much about leadership, professional development, and the importance of service learning.

I currently manage chapter operations and development for The National Society of Collegiate Scholars and help officers get chapters started at campuses that have never had a local chapter before. This is a challenging opportunity that only few students take on, but they learn and grow so much in the process.

I've created this guide to make starting a chapter a little bit easier and more organized of a process. I can't say that progress will be linear as every school is different, so this guide isn't indicative of the order and timing in which everything will get done. However, it will be a good place to start so that you can see what goals need to be reached over time. In addition to this resource, I will be your primary point of contact when any questions or concerns arise. I am always here to help!

I'm looking forward to embarking on this amazing journey with you, and I am proud of you for taking on this opportunity!

All the best,

Holly H. Barclay
Manager, Chapter Operations and Development
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Goal #1: Find an NSCS Advisor

An NSCS Advisor is a critical part of your team. An advisor can be a faculty or staff member, preferably working full-time, who really enjoys working with students. We have advisors from virtually every discipline—math faculty to academic advising to music instruction. The advisors bring so much mentorship and diversity to our chapters and their guidance really helps chapters thrive. Here are some action steps to take when recruiting an advisor:

- **Identify candidates.** Make a spreadsheet of all professors or staff members that you or another officer on your team has personally worked with during your time as a student. List their name (formal title and last name) and email addresses. Prioritize candidates who are full-time employees, those who students generally love working with, and who you think would be happy to dedicate an hour of time a month to your chapter.
- **Contact candidates** via email with information about the position. Personalize the messages and let them know why you think they would be great for the role. If you don't hear back from someone for a day or so, contact the next person on your list. Don't be discouraged if you get some "no's!" It happens; professors are typically very busy. Don't take it personally.

Sample email:

Good afternoon, Dr. Mattingly!

My name is Sam Smith and I'm looking to be the founding chapter president here at UMB for an honors organization called The National Society of Collegiate Scholars. I'm looking for a faculty member to serve as the advisor for NSCS and I think you would be a wonderful leader for our group of dedicated students! I love your leadership style and you always make math lectures so engaging and fun. The advisor role only requires an hour or less of time commitment a month and our advisors have access to professional stipends and continuing education workshops. Let me know if you'd like to chat about the position!

All the best,
Sam

- **Meet with advisor candidate(s)** who demonstrate interest in the position via Zoom, in person, or over the phone and connect them with Holly for next steps. During your meeting, don't forget to close the deal. Ask—would you like to take on the advisor role for our chapter? They might say yes, no, or they want to think about it.
- **Communicate** with Holly during the whole process. CC her on emails and let her know if you haven't gotten a positive response yet or if you have some advisor candidates who are on the fence about the role. She can help clear up any doubts with those candidates or help you find more contacts!

Goal #2: Develop a Leadership Team

- **Get a count.** Ask Holly how many members are currently students on your campus. If there are other members aside from yourself, this is a good time to reach out and get to know your members and ask them if they'd like to be on the founding leadership team with you.
- **Get to know your members.** If you send out an email to your members and don't get much of a response, try sending out a "Getting to Know You" form to your members, asking what they would like to get out of the chapter. Add "Being a Leader" and "Professional Development" as a couple of the options, in addition to "Meeting New Friends" or "Serving the community." Here is a sample [Getting To Know You Form](#). Contact all members who filled it out and let them know how being an officer could help them reach their goals.
- **Contact your network.** Contact your friends and colleagues and see if they would like to be on the founding officer board with you. If they're not already members, they can [self-nominate](#) as long as they have at least a 3.0 GPA.
- **Work with Holly, your Advisor, and the Registrar.** Holly, your manager, might communicate with your advisor and with the registrar's office about how we can send out invitations to eligible students in your chapter. This will build up your membership and make it easier to recruit more leaders for your team.



Goal #3: Recruit New Members

- **NSCS Image.** “What the heck is NSCS??!” You want students to recognize the NSCS name just like a sorority name or other popular organization on campus. If your campus is operating virtually, see how you might publicly post meeting links or event links in a place where all students can see them to increase familiarity with NSCS. Maybe you could create a bulletin board display on campus in a prominent place with pictures and a calendar of upcoming virtual events. See if you can list your upcoming meetings in your department newsletter and campus newspaper or write an article for your campus paper on a successful chapter project. There's lots of avenues to get the word out there!
- **Host an information session.** Host an informational meeting about NSCS with instructions about how to get involved and how to join. Ask members to bring a friend! Thank people for coming after the meeting so that each prospective member feels special. Try to remember names and to smile and greet people by name when you see them around campus or in Zoom classrooms.
- **Eligible Member Information.** Your advisor or chapter operations manager will work on getting Eligible Member Information (EMI) from the registrar's office, which is a list of eligible student names, emails, and mailing addresses so that they can be invited to join.
- **Get support from faculty and staff.** Try asking a professor to offer extra credit for participation in one of your professional development or community service events or ask if you can announce an upcoming event before class and invite all students to attend.
Another great contact to have is academic advisors! Ask a few academic advisors to mention NSCS to students in their advising sessions as a good way to get involved in their first and second years.
- **Network with other organizations.** Hold a joint meeting or event with a related organization and get to know those leaders. Maybe participate in a charity event with other clubs, like working together on a food drive or park clean-up. Invite members of other groups to visit one of your virtual meetings and learn more about your chapter.
- **Get people excited about NSCS.** Always speak with excitement and pride when describing your chapter. Enthusiasm is contagious! Another way to increase excitement is to use chapter funds to create some prizes for participation. Get people's contact information so you can let them know what events they should be getting excited about.

Goal #4: Get Recognized as a Student Organization on Campus

- Contact your Student Life or Student Organizations office about how to register a new student organization. They might have the process published on their website!
- If they have a contact listed, please use their name. If not, I would say "To whom it may concern." Here is an email to use when reaching out to your student life department:

Dear Ms. Williams,

My name is Jeffrey Scott and I'm interested in founding a new student organization chapter here at Sample College. It is called The National Society of Collegiate Scholars. I am a member of the national chapter of NSCS, a non-profit organization that helps high-achieving students get connected with opportunities related to scholarship, leadership, and service. I've really enjoyed my experience so far with scholarship opportunities and online webinars offered at the national level, but I would really like to create a local chapter here at Sample College so that I can work on developing my leadership skills. Would you please assist me by letting me know the steps I need to take to get a new organization recognized on campus?

Looking forward to working with you.

All the best,
Jeffrey

- When they respond to your inquiry, they will likely ask for the following from you:

Item	Where to Access It
A roster of all your members	Ask Holly for a roster of all your members via email.
A roster of all your NSCS officers	List your name and contact information and any other officer contact information here.
The NSCS Constitution	Edit this constitution by adding the name of your school in a few places highlighted.
Your NSCS Advisor's name and contact information	Include your advisor's name and contact information here.
Your participation in some kind of training as a student organization leader	Follow the instructions that they send your way

After submitting all requested materials, they might approve your status as a recognized student organization on campus or they might ask for some revisions to be made. Please keep Holly in the loop and let her know if you need additional resources!

Benefits of Being a Founding Officer

- You will be rewarded at the end of the spring with a scholarship if your checklist is complete!
- You can list "Founding Chapter Officer" on your resume and LinkedIn profile to make you stand out from other candidates for a position. In your interview, you can talk about how you brought a new chapter of an honors organization to your college or university.
- You will grow so much in your leadership skills by talking to administrators at your university, networking with other students and with professors/advisors, by representing a brand with enthusiasm and knowledge, and by embracing a challenge and seeing it through to the final stages.
- You will grow in your self-confidence as a leader and scholar – this is not an easy task, and you will be successful!

Your NSCS Founding Officer Checklist:

---- Find an Advisor

---- Develop a Leadership Team

---- Work on Recruitment

---- Get Recognized as a Student Organization on Campus

---- Ask for your Founding Officer Scholarship at the end of this Spring

Go forth, and good luck! Please contact Holly at barclay@nscs.org should any questions arise. You can do this!