

Tips to Make and Keep CEC a “Must-Do!” at Your College! Poster Session at 2005 CEC Convention and Expo, Baltimore, MD

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Developing the rhythm of CEC on your campus is not a one-time effort. Challenge yourself and your campus to keep CEC interesting and worthwhile! Go beyond establishing a CEC student chapter, a faculty advisor, and a web site!

The ideas below are tried-and-true ways to stimulate your thinking about your campus CEC offerings. Ideally, they will give you and others on your campus new ways to keep CEC activities valuable and central to what you do!

Involve students: stimulate their minds, uplift their spirits and make them feel welcome!

- **Invite** students to a series of 5-6 events throughout the year: e.g. 1-2 with outside speakers, 1-2 involving active participation in your community; 1-2 that are enjoyable, social activities. Make sure that you have a combination of varied programming and service activities. Hot topics: behavior management, incorporating the CEC Standards in lesson planning, seeking employment, the implications of current research findings and teaching.
- **Publicize** events via:
 - Professional-looking posters (extra proof-reading pays off!)
 - Announcements in education classes
 - Links to web announcements (and your CEC campus web site, which should link to the state/provincial CEC web site) on academic department web sites and campus events bulletin board
 - Personal outreach to students new to your campus -- involve them in CEC
- **Participate** in planning and offering your state/provincial convention:
 - Coordinate a panel presentation with other colleges in your state/province
 - Volunteer to assist at registration, in advance of and during the convention
 - Staff a membership table for CEC (and publicize your college chapter) at local conferences
- **Recognize** excellence
 - Work with academic departments to establish scholarships related to CEC work: try to get three scholarships for student memberships to CEC for the coming year
 - Give certificates at the end of the year to students who have contributed time and talent to CEC, as well as to the officers who served in local campus chapter
 - Invite faculty members to speak to your chapter about “excellence” and involvement in CEC

Plan for next year while working on this year

- **Maintain** a leadership chain so as to not be caught without students to serve as officers for your chapter. Remember that once students get involved with course work in schools, their CEC participation will diminish
- **Mentor** students who are interested in leadership activities; invite them to coordinate events, in partnership with more senior student members
- **Anticipate** the needs for the officers early on, and don't get surprised at the last minute
- **Work** with others in your state or province to develop and offer an annual leadership seminar for new officers. Models for such programs are available from the Florida and New York student CEC associations.

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Engage campus faculty and staff with your CEC chapter

- **Rotate** faculty advisors for CEC on your campus. Why?
 - When only one faculty member is identified with CEC, the personality of that person gets associated with the organization – some students like the person, others don't...
 - Any faculty member long involved with CEC runs out of new ideas or plateaus in enthusiasm for CEC. Rotation of faculty advisors can provide new ideas for activities, as well as a chance for re-energizing all members of the faculty regarding CEC.
 - Getting multiple faculty members involved in CEC can offer perspectives on different CEC Divisions; faculty members bring their interests, passions, and contacts to your CEC chapter.
- **Involve** faculty and staff with relevant interests in CEC activities throughout the year. Why? Professors can:
 - Share information (and excitement!) about conferences sponsored by CEC Divisions
 - Bring examples of publications produced by CEC Divisions to which they belong.
 - Assign course readings from *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, *Exceptional Children*, *CEC Today*, and Division journals
 - Obtain and distribute **free** CEC promotional materials (CEC Overview Flyer, Top 10 Reasons Why You Should Belong to CEC, membership applications) on the first day of their courses
- **Connect** your campus office offering “services to individuals with disabilities” with your CEC chapter’s activities
 - Interview the staff members to learn about the goals of the office and services provided
 - Offer to volunteer to assist the office in their efforts
 - Publicize CEC events within this office, and invite college students with disabilities to participate in your chapter’s activities
- **Fundraising** can support activities, refreshments, and membership awards at year-end:
 - Carwashes
 - Raffles at meetings and conferences (e.g., get donated raffle prizes, or extra copies of the publications from CEC obtained for free by faculty and staff members who are CEC Division members)
 - Pizza sales
 - Babysitting services for children with disabilities
 - Admission fee (nominal): offer special events with Guest Speakers

Connect your CEC chapter with your broader community

- **Develop** annual activities corresponding to events sponsored by agencies serving people with disabilities
- **Involve** family members of individuals with disabilities in CEC activities
- **Invite** speakers from local organizations to speak at your campus

Maintain open lines of communication with all levels of CEC and CEC Divisions

- **Encourage** your students to be actively involved in state/provincial conferences.
 - **Idea 1:** Develop a PowerPoint presentation for professors to use to highlight involvement in CEC, including details about past and upcoming CEC Conventions and your college’s participation
 - **Idea 2:** Include college students in pictures in PowerPoints developed for professors, as well as in Poster Sessions and at campus CEC events.
 - **Idea 3:** Engage your students with other students in the state, in leadership roles and workshops
 - **Idea 4:** Encourage professors to secure State Improvement Grants and designate a portion of this funding to promote student’s participation in CEC at the state/provincial and international levels.
- **Share** news about upcoming conferences (especially those that are geographically convenient) in a timely way and coordinate transportation/housing to make conference attendance easier
- **Integrate** CEC journals and books into the work of your CEC chapter
 - Share CEC publication catalogs when appropriate
 - Make use of the articles in CEC journals in papers written for courses
 - Write reviews of articles in CEC journals, and post them on your CEC web site