



CAMPUS ORGANIZING 101

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Introduction

If you're reading this, it means you're interested in organizing a chapter for Young Greens of the US on your campus. Great! So now what? This Campus Organizing 101 guide will take you through the basic steps of starting and running a successful Young Greens chapter.



STEP 1: RECRUIT CAMPUS ORGANIZERS

While it is possible for one person to get the ball rolling, it's easier if there are more than one core organizers early on. Ask others on campus if they're interested in helping you start a Young Greens chapter. Some ways to connect: talk to activists you know, send emails and social media messages, set up a table at a student center or activity fair, make announcements in classes and groups, and distribute posters and flyers. These

same methods will be helpful for recruiting members once your group is established.

Make sure you stay in touch with the Youth Caucus, so we can help you organize more effectively by having coordinated communication with the national organization.

REGISTER YOUR CHAPTER WITH YOUR CAMPUS

There may be benefits to registering your Young Greens organization with your campus as an official student group such as access to space, campus bulletins, and student activity funding. Because rules regarding student organizations vary from one campus to another, you should talk to your administration about registering your group.

Recruit Members

One of the first things you want to do is reach out to your campus to recruit members for your Young Greens chapter. Generally, it's best to do this early in the school year or semester, when students are looking to join groups and before classes get too demanding. To recruit members, use these tried and true organizing methods and target students who are likely to be interested in Jill Stein's message:

- ❖ Talk to friends and activists.
- ❖ Send emails and social media messages, in particular to lists and groups.
- ❖ Set up an information table at activity fairs, student centers, and dining halls.
- ❖ Make announcements in classes and groups.
- ❖ Distribute posters and flyers, especially in places where they're likely to reach interested students (for example, an environmental studies building or social justice center).
- ❖ Hold an interest meeting.
- ❖ Submit an announcement or column to campus publications.

Be sure to use these methods, but don't be shy about trying others that work for you. Just make sure to always get contact info (full name, phone, email) for anyone who's interested so you can follow up on that great conversation!

HOLD AN INTEREST MEETING

One very effective way to recruit members is by holding an interest meeting: a meeting for people who are interested in Young Greens to learn more and consider joining. Schedule your

interest meeting at least 2 weeks in advance, if possible, so that you have time to promote it. Put up posters and distribute flyers to promote the meeting. Make sure to include details about place, time, and contact info.

At the meeting, you may want to: do an icebreaker where people say their name, where they're from, and why they're interested in the Green Party; play the Green Party YouTube Video "Ben Manski - History and Future of the Green Party"; give a brief presentation about the campaign and Young Greens; do a Q&A; and talk about projects your Young Greens chapter is working on. Make sure to have people fill out a signup sheet as they arrive and before they leave.

LITERATURE AND MATERIALS

The basic literature and materials you need for recruitment are available from the Youth Caucus (although you may need to print them out on your campus). These include signup sheets and the campus chapter application form, as well as general Youth Caucus materials like the basic informational flyer. The Youth Caucus will also produce materials to support issue campaigns and other organizing projects. The Youth Caucus logo and other Young Greens graphics will be made available for you to produce your own materials.

CHAPTER MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Once you've recruited a group of members, it's time to start meeting regularly and organizing activities for your Young Greens chapter. Schedule your meetings at a convenient time (you can use a doodle.com poll to determine the best time for your members) in a public space that has the right amount of room for your group (student centers usually are good for meetings). Once you have a time and place, make sure to publish announcements in any campus publications that list student activities.

At meetings, it's important to have projects that members can get involved in. If members feel like meetings are not accomplishing anything, they're likely to stop attending. Sometimes organizers feel uneasy setting the agenda for a meeting, and instead turn the meeting into an open discussion and brainstorming session for what the group could do. This can lead to a lack of direction, indecision, and frustration. A better approach is for the officers to decide on 2 or 3 potential projects before the meeting, then ask members for feedback and ideas about other potential projects before the group decides what to focus on. Make sure to have someone taking notes about the group's decisions.

To turn your plans into action, your group should identify specific tasks that need to be done, when they need to get done, and who can volunteer to do them. Once you have this figured out, the important thing is to follow up with volunteers to make sure they have what they need to complete their tasks.

For ideas about projects and activities for your Young Greens chapter, take a look at the Youth Caucus' menu of suggested activities for campus chapters.

CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

To run an effective chapter, you need effective group communications. Email lists are a good way to send out meeting announcements, meeting notes, information about events and activities, and the like. Many campuses help student groups to set up email lists; if this isn't an option, you can use a service like Google Groups.

Because people don't always check email constantly, it's a good idea to send text message reminders about chapter meetings and events. For important events, it's also a good idea to call people beforehand to confirm that they can come.

A social media presence, like a facebook group, can help to get the word out about meetings, events, etc. But don't rely on social media as the main way to communicate with your group - it's too easy for social media messages to go unnoticed.

OUTREACH

Outreach can refer to any activity that involves reaching out to people outside your group to inform them about YGR and give them an opportunity to get involved. Some activities, like tabling, are all about outreach; for others, like public issue forums, outreach can be a secondary goal.

Tabling is one of the most important forms of outreach on campus, especially when getting your chapter started. To table, you'll need a posterboard or banner with your group's name and the YGR logo, as well as materials like informational brochures, signup sheets, flyers with info about special events like an interest meeting, etc. Student activity fairs, where students are looking for groups to join, are a great place to table. Student centers, dining halls, and other

areas with lots of foot traffic are also good. Whenever you have a good conversation with someone who seems interested, make sure to ask them to sign up.

When tabling or doing any kind of outreach, always try to have at least two volunteers working together, especially if any of the volunteers are new members. Outreach is much easier and less intimidating if you have someone to talk with. It also makes a great opportunity for group members to get to know each other and learn from each other.

Leadership And Training

"I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." -Ralph Nader

You may have an idea that leaders are people who are born with charisma and public speaking skills, but really leadership is a set of skills that can be learned and practiced. Good leadership starts with being responsible and dependable, communicating well with your group's members, and working to involve everyone in ways that fit them.

Here are some useful terms and concepts regarding leadership:

- ❖ **Ask, Inform, Involve, Thank** (the AIIT method): Ask a member to volunteer for a task. Inform them about the task and what they would need to do. If they accept, involve them and give them the support they need to succeed. Thank them often, especially when they agree to volunteer and when they finish the task.
- ❖ **Facilitation**: An important role for leaders is facilitating meetings, which involves forming an agenda (with input from the group), recognizing members to speak (often taking a "stack" of people who want to speak, and allowing them to speak uninterrupted until they "pass"), keeping discussions on topic and on time, and calling for votes when necessary. It's okay if your group doesn't always agree; for this reason, you may want to use a modified consensus decision-making process.
- ❖ **Step Up, Step Back**: In a healthy group, all members should be encouraged to "step up" periodically, whether that means speaking up during a discussion or volunteering to help get something done. People should also be willing to "step back", especially if they are dominating a discussion or if they are doing more work than it's reasonable to

expect. Having leaders step back creates an opportunity for others to step up, which is crucial for developing a sustainable group.

- ❖ **One-On-One:** One-on-one meetings with group members are a great way to get to know members, especially those who don't speak much in a group setting, and figure out the best way for them to get involved. One-on-ones are a good way to ask members to step up for a large volunteer task or officer role.
 - ❖ **Follow-Up:** This key term refers both to finishing the tasks one has volunteered for, and checking in with volunteers and others to make sure things are happening how they're supposed to. As a leader, you should be sure to follow up on everything you agree to do, follow up with volunteers to make sure they're on task, follow up with new contacts to invite them to your group, etc.
 - ❖ **Accountability:** It's important that members have accountability to the group; you don't want a group project to fall apart because one person doesn't do the work they agreed to do. Make sure to follow up with people one-on-one before deadlines hit, and if they can't do what they signed up for, find someone else to do it. Be understanding; part of being an activist is learning our limits, and most of us find ourselves overcommitted at some point.
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Menu Of Suggested Activities For Young Greens Chapters

- ❖ **Tabling:** Table in selected places - like campus activity fairs that are usually held at the beginning of the academic year/semester - for Young Greens to distribute Green Party information candidate information and to sign up supporters and volunteers.
- ❖ **Voter registration:** Voter registration drives are a good opportunity to increase Green visibility, identify student supporters, talk with students about their opinions and concerns, and invite supportive students to join the Young Greens chapter.
- ❖ **Chapter meetings:** Hold regular Young Greens meetings to build relationships within the group, plan group activities, and discuss ways to support and build relationships with other activist movements on campus to increase interest in the Green Party.

- ❖ **Public forums:** Hold public forums to highlight important issues of special interest to students, ie. abolishing student debt, tuition-free public education, legalization of marijuana/hemp, Green New Deal, etc. and recruit supporters. Young Green chapters could bring speakers from the Green Party speaker's bureau, especially if they have access to campus funding for speakers.
- ❖ **Editorials:** Write articles and letters for campus papers from a Green perspective.
- ❖ **Prospect identification:** Identify and compile a list of campus activists and opinion leaders with names and contact info, and share this list with the Youth Caucus. When appropriate, the caucus will invite these prospective supporters to support the Green Party, and will invite them to host local events involving Greens running for election.
- ❖ **Debates:** Organize debates (especially in Fall 2016) between representatives of each party organization (including Democrats, Libertarians, and Republicans). If Democrats and Republicans organize a debate, demand inclusion of Greens. Consider partnering with Libertarians to increase impact of debates activism.
- ❖ **Candidate events:** When prominent Greens are visiting your area, coordinate with their campaigns in advance to organize and promote events to introduce the maximum number of students (and community members) to the candidates.
- ❖ **Ballot access:** Gather signatures in states where the campaign is petitioning to get on the ballot, in coordination with campaign staff overseeing ballot access efforts.
- ❖ **Support local campaigns:** Support Green candidates running in your community, region, or state by providing volunteers for their campaign to make phone calls, drop literature, knock on doors, work the polls, etc. This both helps the candidates and gives you valuable experience in grassroots political organizing.
- ❖ **Coordinated issue campaigns:** Build Green identity and support on campus by participating in national campaigns to promote Green positions on issues of special interest to students. This could be done with posters, flyers, stickers, memes, t-shirts, chalking, forums, debates, etc.
- ❖ **Artistic activism:** Chalking, postering, concerts, and other artistic displays to raise awareness of Jill Stein and the Green Party.
- ❖ **Green Party parties:** Throw a "Green party" (or "Green Party party") where students can talk about Green issues and the elections in an informal setting, with snacks, music, games, and a short video from the Green Party.

- ❖ **Polling:** The campaign may work with several chapters to conduct a scientific poll of students to identify issues and assess the effectiveness of our message. Students could be questioned about their political allegiances, their opinions about the Green Party, their priority issues, their likeliness to vote Green, etc.
- ❖ **Content creation:** Make contributions of content to the online Green Party channels. For example, pictures or videos of students saying why they support the Green Party and plan to vote Green in the general election.
- ❖ **Campus election reform:** Promote Green positions on electoral reform by campaigning to change campus elections to use ranked-choice voting (aka instant runoff voting) and/or proportional representation as appropriate.
- ❖ **Voter ID:** Participate in the campaign's efforts to identify voters who are likely to vote for Jill Stein, in preparation for the Get Out The Vote campaign.
- ❖ **Get Out The Vote:** Participate in the GOTV efforts before Election Day, including field work, phone calls, texting, social media, and other methods of maximizing supporter turnout.
- ❖ **Campaign debrief:** After election day, hold a discussion with Young Green chapter members about what worked well for the campaigns, what could have worked better, what didn't work, and lessons for the future. Turn this into a report and submit it to Youth Caucus to use for a national debrief.
- ❖ **Post-campaign vision:** After the election, join other Young Green members and leaders in a national effort to create a vision for the future and plan next steps together.

