



American Physical Therapy AssociationSM

Core Ambassador Handbook

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Introduction

Hello, and congratulations on taking on the role of Core Ambassador for your state! The Vice President's role is to inform, engage, and highlight events happening on the national level, with a focus on sharing information to you, the Core Ambassadors.

As a Core Ambassador (CA), you represent your state to the Student Assembly Board of Directors (SABoD). This document will provide a summary of the organization of APTA and where your role as the CA fits. Your main duty is to foster engagement with students in your state and to be the conduit from your state to the Student Assembly Board and vice versa. Hyperlinks to valuable resources will be included throughout the CA Handbook. Our hope is that this resource will enable you to:

- Describe the organization of APTA and the role of the Core Ambassador
- Develop a plan for maintaining contact with students and faculty in your state
- Understand how to share and find opportunities to inform and involve students

Your main point of contact will be the Vice President of the SABoD. The Vice President's role is to inform, engage, and highlight events happening on the national level, with a focus on sharing information to you, the CAs. You can contact the Vice President at aptasa.vicepresident@gmail.com.

Organization of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

[House of Delegates](#)

APTA's House of Delegates has authority to determine directives and policies of the Association, to elect the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee; and to;

- Amend and repeal APTA bylaws
- Amend, suspend, or rescind APTA's standing rules
- Adopt ethical principles and standards to govern the conduct of members of the Association in their roles as physical therapists or physical therapist assistants; and
- Modify or reverse a decision of the Board of Directors

The House of Delegates is the collective voice of APTA members. Currently, there are over 400 delegates who represent APTA's chapters, sections, the Student Assembly, and the PTA Caucus. Similar to U.S. Congress, the number of delegates for each state is dependent upon the number of members within that state. The PTA Caucus has six delegates, and each of APTA's 18 specialty sections has two.

[Board of Directors](#)

APTA's Board of Directors is comprised of 15 members: 6 officers and 9 directors. Members of the Board, appointed through a nominations and elections process, assume office at the close of the House of Delegates at which they were elected. A complete term for a Board member is defined as 3 years. The Board of Directors acts as the planning body that decides how to carry out the motions that are passed by the House of Delegates.

[Student Assembly Board of Directors \(SABoD\)](#)

The SABoD is comprised of 10 student members. Members of the SABoD, appointed through a nominations and elections process, assume office at the close of the National Student Conclave at which

they were elected. A complete term for a Board member (With the exception of the Nominating Committee Chair–Elect) is 1 year.

The SABoD acts as the planning body that decides how to best foster the growth of the Student Assembly and engage students through projects, presentations, and personal meet and greets. Although the SABoD works separately from the “Big Board,” there is an APTA staff liaison along with a “Big Board” member liaison who assists us in our planning and organization.

1. Student Assembly Vice President

A. Position Description

Acts in place of the Student Assembly President whenever the President is unable to fulfill their duties. The Vice President’s main duty is to educate and inform the Student Assembly through the Student Assembly’s communication network. This includes the Core Ambassadors and the Student Special Interest Group Board Liaison. In doing so, the Vice President must be adaptable, a good communicator, and be able to assess best practices to facilitate the Core Ambassadors in their duties.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

- Monitor and direct actions concerning the Student Assembly’s communication network, to include overseeing all Core Ambassadors (CAs) and assisting Board liaisons
- Filling the Core Ambassador position for each state through an application process on APTA Engage
- Ensure all [state contact lists](#) are up-to-date

2. Core Ambassador

A. Position Description

Core Ambassadors (CAs) represent their state to the SABoD. Their main duty is to foster engagement with the students within their state to the Student Assembly and vice versa. CAs must be able to share, understand, and find opportunities to inform and involve students. CAs are responsible for implementing strategies and initiatives that promote student engagement. Their goal is to create awareness of advocacy efforts at the state and national levels and to provide students with opportunities to increase involvement within APTA. CAs communicate and sometimes develop student initiatives within their state chapter to enhance the student experience.

The CA will relay information from the SABoD to students in their state, and are encouraged to share relevant information from chapter and district leadership as well. The CA selection process will be held twice a year, February-March and August-September, by the SABoD through [APTA Engage](#). A mandatory orientation will follow each selection period where the current Vice President will discuss the Core Ambassador Handbook and go over the roles and responsibilities of the position.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

- Maintain an up-to-date [contact list](#) for your state, including a faculty contact and student representative from each program in your state, a point of contact with chapter leadership, and state Student Special Interest Group (SSIG) contact, if applicable.
- Effectively communicate information from SABoD, state SSIG and state chapter to your program contacts and vice versa
- Use the monthly newsletter from the SABoD Vice President to construct regular emails to your student contacts that include state specific involvement opportunities
- Engage students in the respective state and provide involvement opportunities on local and national levels
- Respond to SABoD liaison communication within 48 hours, as consistent with policies and procedures, and “cc” aptasa.vicepresident@gmail.com on all monthly emails to programs
- Participate in monthly CA webinars hosted by SABoD Vice President
- Complete 1 APTA project during your term and document this in the *Core Ambassador Project List*
- Present 1-3 APTA Value presentations (including at least 1 PT and 1 PTA school, if possible)
- Organize and promote National Advocacy Dinners
- When attending APTA meetings, volunteer time at the Student Assembly booth
- Create and update a State Involvement Sheet (collaborate with state SSIG, if applicable)
 - Refer to examples here:
 - [California](#)
 - [Florida](#)
- Mentor and assist the SABoD with the transition of a successor for your Core Ambassador position

C. Maintaining Contact & Communication

- Communication between the Vice President and the Core Ambassador

The Vice President will maintain monthly communication via the Core Ambassador Update email, sent by the VP on either the last or second to last weekend of the month. The timing of this email aligns with monthly Pulse distribution to SA members so messaging is consistent. Core Ambassadors are encouraged to adapt the monthly CA email to what’s happening locally in their states before sharing with their local networks, and “cc” aptasa.vicepresident@gmail.com on emails to program representatives. The VP will also host mandatory, monthly CA webinars on APTA’s webinar platform, AdobeConnect. These are designed to provide CA’s with important information to help them succeed throughout their term.

- Communication between the Core Ambassadors and the students within their state

As the Core Ambassador, you will reach out to the students to assess what discussions, concerns, or questions students may have about the APTA. This could involve surveys, webinars, conference calls, or in-person gatherings. Your duty, then, is to assist these students in answering these questions or directing them to an individual who may know the answers. If you are ever unsure about how to answer a question, or if the discussion falls outside of the scope of your position, please email the Vice President to request further assistance.

- Communication with state Student Special Interest Group (SSIG)

For optimal communication at the state level, it is important to collaborate and coordinate with the state SSIG, if one exists. Success is often found in merging national monthly information from the CA Update with state information from the state SSIG into one monthly newsletter. It will also be beneficial to coordinate on state involvement opportunities and events.

- Communication with each other

There are more than 50 Core Ambassadors, each with a different set of ideas, beliefs, and experiences. Reaching out to each other and developing relationships within this network will better foster your growth and development, and provide you with additional assistance throughout your term. You can do this by accessing the CA Contact list or the APTA Core Ambassadors Facebook page.

D. Projects

The primary duty of a Core Ambassador is to engage the student community throughout the year. Projects that focus on engagement can range from hosting a community event, to initiating/developing a Student Conclave/Conference, to organizing a Pub Night. It's totally up to you! Resources are available with information from previous Core Ambassadors and how they completed their projects.

E. APTA Value Presentation

APTA has developed Value Talk presentations for members and leaders to dispatch in their communities, educational programs, districts, and chapters. Membership in APTA is personal; it's a choice, and it means something different to everyone. This presentation is intended to convey that APTA is there for our members through every facet of their education and professional careers.

The goal is to show how students can engage, starting in school and throughout their physical therapy career. The presentations are designed to be presented solo or with a partner, with talking points provided for each slide. You can sign up to present a Value Talk Presentation on [APTA Engage](#) APTA staff or a member of the SABoD can join you virtually too!

F. National Advocacy Dinners (NAD)

NADs are student-led events designed with the purpose of gathering students to learn about advocacy and federal legislative efforts to improve the profession. Successful

NADs can be as small as a pizza party, or as large as a catered event with state lobbyists and chapter presidents as guest speakers. A Student Assembly Project Committee was established to help guide you with this planning and promotion. The Chair is XX. Please don't hesitate to use him/her as a resource!

G. Duties, Resources, and Navigating Google Drive

- First Month Duties
 - Email the SABoD VP with the following:
 - a. Name
 - b. Email (School or Personal)
 - c. Twitter handle
 - d. School
 - e. Phone Number
 - [Consent to Serve](#) – email to danielhamilton@apta.org along with your head shot
 - Familiarize yourself with the Core Ambassador Toolkit
 - Create State Project Involvement List
 - Examples:
 - [California](#)
 - [Florida](#)
- Term Duties
 - Maintain up to date state [Contact Lists](#)
 - Monthly Core Ambassador Update Emails
 - Monthly Core Ambassador Webinars
 - CA Project with proper documentation
 - a. See [Complete Core Ambassador Project List](#) for examples!
 - APTA Value presentations
 - National Advocacy Dinners
 - Volunteering at National Conferences, if attending
- End of Term Duties
 - Assist SABoD in the transition of a new CA for your state and mentor them with Gmail account, state contact list, and other state level information.

3. [Student Assembly Project Committees](#)

Student Assembly Project Committees (PCs) are established by the SABoD to support the annual goals of the Student Assembly. Each PC is comprised of 1 or 2 chairs and 5 to 7 members who are appointed through an annual application process. Each PC regularly collaborates with an assigned member of the SABoD and APTA staff. The assigned SABoD member will assist the PC chair(s) and members in establishing and accomplishing the goals outlined in the year's strategic plan. Past PCs have been appointed in our work pertaining to community service, global outreach, interprofessional collaboration, National Student Conclave, and professional advocacy.

4. [Student Special Interest Groups](#)

Student Special Interested Groups (SSIGs) exist at the chapter level. Their purpose is to provide a means by which student physical therapist and student physical therapy assistant students, having a common interest, may meet, confer, and promote chapter and national initiatives. SSIGs are not mandated or overseen by the Student Assembly Board of Directors, but we support their development and place importance on connecting with SSIG leaders directly and through our Core Ambassadors.

SSIGs can be instrumental in helping students develop a professional network, optimize communication skills, strengthen their knowledge base, and refine their interests.

