



Guide to Starting an Oncology Student Interest Group (OSIG)

OVERVIEW

An **Oncology Student Interest Group (OSIG)** is an organized group of medical students and/or residents who share a common interest in the field of oncology and meet regularly to learn more about cancer, patient care, and pursuing a career in oncology. These groups are student-led and operate with a faculty advisor who assists the student leaders with developing the interest group programming and ensures the group remains active from year-to-year.

Participating in an oncology interest group at your institution is an excellent way to begin building connections in the oncology community and to explore the different career opportunities available in the field of oncology.

As a first step, we recommend all interested students **apply for ASCO membership at [join.asco.org](https://www.asco.org/join)**. Membership is **free** for medical students and residents and provides access to tailored resources and opportunities.

ESTABLISHING YOUR OSIG

Consult Your Institution's Administration

Consult with your school's administration about how to go about establishing an official club at your school. Below you'll find a list of key individuals and departments that you will likely need to contact as you establish your group:

Associate Dean or Dean of Academic Affairs: Meet to determine how to start a new group at the medical school. If you do not have a faculty advisor in mind, ask if they have suggestions as to who might be an enthusiastic and supportive faculty advisor for the club.

Student Affairs Office and/or Office of Student Involvement: This office will assist with the logistics of running your group (i.e. how to reserve space for meetings, how to participate in club fairs, how to set up a bank account for your group, etc.).

Develop Your Student Leadership Board

Groups usually operate with a multi-student leadership board made-up of a President(s), Vice President(s), Treasurer, Secretary, and additional leaders, if the group sees fit.

Identify a Faculty Advisor

Find a supportive faculty member at your institution and schedule a meeting with them to discuss your group and proposed group goals. This individual does not need to be an oncologist. However, having a faculty advisor that is a part of the oncology community will assist your group in connecting with possible speakers and in identifying oncology research and shadowing opportunities. To help you identify a faculty advisor or possible faculty for your group's events and activities, we recommend:

Utilizing ASCO's Membership Directory to locate ASCO-Member-oncologists at your institution: Login with your ASCO username and password to [search the Directory](#) by an individual's name or by institution.



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Connecting with the Oncology Training Program Director(s) and the Oncology Division Chief/Chair at your institution: Oncology Training Program Directors oversee their institution's oncology fellowship and are responsible for the education and professional development of their oncology trainees. Oncology Division Chiefs and Chairs oversee the oncology faculty at their institution. These individuals can serve as a resource to your group by assisting with identifying faculty and topics for your events.

EVENTS

Tips/Tricks to Hosting Successful Events

- Host your events and meetings around meal times and offer free food, if possible.
- Partner with other interest groups to increase your reach and help your resources go further. For example, hosting events with Pathology, Radiology, or Pediatric interest groups when there is an overlap in topics or interests between the two groups.
- Participating in your institution's club/interest group fair at the beginning of the term. This is a good member recruitment tool and is a great way to advertise your meetings and events.

Suggested Events and Activities

- **Journal Clubs**
 - Student/Resident members of ASCO have free online access to [Journal of Oncology Practice](#), [JCO Clinical Cancer Informatics](#), [Journal of Global Oncology](#) and [JCO Precision Oncology](#)
- **Tumor Board and Mock Tumor Board Discussions**
- **Panel Discussions**
 - Oncology Subspecialties: Invite oncologists from the various subspecialties (Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Surgical Oncology, Pediatric Oncology, etc.) to provide an overview of their subspecialty and their day-to-day life.
 - Oncology Practice Settings: Invite oncologists from Academic and Private Practice settings to provide an overview of their practice setting and their day-to-day life.
 - *Landing Your Dream Residency or Fellowship*: Invite residents and/or fellows from your institution to discuss their experience and to provide resume, application, and interview tips/tricks.
- **Social Events**
- **Community Outreach Events**
- **Educational Lectures on Cancer, Patient Care, and Oncology Career/Training Topics**

REGISTERING YOUR GROUP WITH ASCO

Group registration takes place annually and the registration period is from June – August.

Register your group to access tailored resources, specialized mentoring and networking opportunities, as well as the opportunity to submit research to the Medical Student & Resident Abstract Forum.

Registration will open in early June each year and more details on the registration process will be available on asco.org (search "medical students or residents").