

Starting an AIChE Student Chapter

With its first student chapter founded in 1922, AIChE has been a leading organization for chemical engineering professionals as well as students for decades. An ever-growing organization, AIChE's student community continues to grow as more student chapters are founded. Last year, an AIChE student chapter was started at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. **Moosa Al Lawati**, chapter founder and current student president, shares with us his experience starting an AIChE student chapter at his university.

1. How did you first hear about AIChE?

The first time I heard about AIChE was when I decided to be a chemical engineer. I was looking for a community that will help me progress and excel in the field of chemical engineering by introducing me to chemical engineering students and industry professionals. It was then when I knew the amazing benefits a member receives such as the AIChE Academy, eLibrary, AIChE Engage, and much more.

2. Why did you decide to start an AIChE Student Chapter at your university?

Well, this is a long story. When I started my major, I became a member in a local chemical engineering students community at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and I started interacting with students by organizing both scientific and fun events for chemical engineers but I always wished to be a part of a larger community where I can network with engineers around the world and learn from other engineers' experiences and get to learn more about the field I am passionate about.

3. How did you gather your fellow students' support? How did you promote AIChE?

With the assistance of Ms. Rugia Malik, I reached out to the students in our department, and told them about AIChE and encouraged them to be AIChE members. We also held introductory meetings and introductory presentations for students. We stressed the benefits that students can get by being members, the benefits of having a student chapter at the university, and the sister chapter program.

4. How did your department support you in starting the student chapter?

The Head of the Department, Prof. Rashid Al-Mamari, and our Student Chapter Advisor, Dr. Ala'a Al-Muhtaseb, were very supportive as they are always, and they provided all the necessary documents for the application. They helped me to overcome the difficulties I faced and to look at such difficulties from a different perspective, which really enhanced my skills and experiences.

5. How was your chapter built to last?

For any building to last, foundations must be set in a very clear and strict manner. Therefore, we introduced the bylaws and we specified a very clear elections procedure to assure transparency, and fairness. Also, it is very important to have fun and scientific events in which

students participate and get engaged in. One more important thing is that we are mentoring students to be the future leaders of the student chapter to assure continuity and quality.

6. What were some of the first events your chapter held?

The first event was an introductory workshop which was held this semester. Junior and Sophomore students were targeted in this workshop.

7. Have the student chapter members benefited from their membership? How so?

Yes. The student chapter helped students engaging with each other as well as getting experience in organizing events and leading the student chapter.

8. What plans does your chapter have for the future?

We are planning to introduce a new committee called social responsibility. This committee will be under the student chapter and is supposed to organize off-campus society outreach events to show the society what chemical engineering is and how important it is.

9. What would you say to students considering starting an AIChE Student Chapter at their own university?

Starting a student chapter is a fantastic experience, If you have it don't miss it and enjoy every single moment of it.

You can find more information about starting an AIChE student chapter online [here](#).