

Michigan Ross Alumni Club Organization and Leadership Roles

Alumni clubs can be structured in many different ways; an understanding of regional culture and leadership team preferences is key in constructing the best organization for your specific club.

- Some successful Michigan Ross clubs have structured themselves upon traditional officer roles such as President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice President of Events and Communications, etc.
- Other clubs have successfully integrated a flatter “chair” construct, with one President managing a Marketing Chair, Social Chair, Career Chair, and other focal area chairs.
- A few clubs have opted to appoint Co-Presidents that share volunteer delegation responsibilities and other duties that might otherwise be taken on by a Treasurer or Secretary position.

Michigan Ross alumni club leadership organization is left to the discretion of each club. Whatever your club’s structure, we strongly encourage you to create a succession plan for leadership turnover. This could take the form of:

- A plan for fixed-term elections.
- A plan for annually soliciting leadership nominations for open officer roles and approving them through the leadership board.
- Having specific positions on the board for rising leadership, such as a President-elect role or co-Chair position that one must hold for one year while being mentored by the present office-holder before the new appointee takes responsibility as primary Chair.
- A staggered term length cycle in which different officers transition on and off the board during different years, to ensure some leadership continuity.
 - For example, a club might create a succession plan in which the President role transitions on/off the board on even years, the Vice President role transitions on/off on odd years, and the Treasurer position is a long-term one that remains the same through multiple President/Vice President transition cycles.

When building a leadership team, it’s important to weigh the strengths of each potential team members and ensure that they complement, rather than replicate, each other, as well as your own. Consider not only personality and leadership style, but also diversity in Michigan Ross graduation year, gender, age, industry and experience.

In particular, it often helps to have alumni representatives from more than one Michigan Ross degree program on your board to ensure no (sometimes large) educational constituency is forgotten or excluded from offered events. Degrees Ross has offered over the years include:

- BBA
- Full-time, Weekend, Evening, and Executive MBAs
- Master of Accounting
- Master of Management

- Master of Supply Chain Management
- Master of Entrepreneurship
- PhD

Some larger clubs may choose to build out additional committees that focus on specific initiatives or programming; smaller regions may have less officers, and seek only to fill those roles most necessary to meet minimum club expectations.

General Descriptions of Specific Club Leadership Role Duties

President:

- Is responsible for the overall organization and operations of the alumni club, including the appointment of other officers and succession planning.
- Assumes fiscal responsibility for the club.
- Motivates and mobilizes the leadership team to plan and host programming and events that (a) further the Michigan Ross mission and vision, and (b) support professional development, networking, and community-building among alumni in the region or affinity.
- Organizes regular leadership team meetings -- whether in person, via phone, or both -- to aid in this work.
- Acts as the primary liaison/contact with the Michigan Ross Office of Alumni Relations.
- With the assistance of a club Secretary, ensures that all required club documentation is submitted on time.

Treasurer:

- In conjunction with regular Michigan Ross budget reports, manages the club's budget and all required paperwork associated with club expenses.
- Communicates with the school to request pre-payment or reimbursement for events, submitting associated paperwork, receipts, attendance lists, etc. after the event concludes.
- Prepares and submits financial reports to the leadership team for board meetings.
- Plans for fiscal year-end final budget needs and requests, due to Michigan Ross by April 30.

Vice President:

- Leads club networking efforts, promotes the club through personal networks, and identifies/contacts potential new club volunteers and leadership -- whether by welcoming new graduates and other Ross alumni to the area, or finding local alumni or other contacts who could serve as club speakers, panelists or venue hosts.
- Acts as presiding officer in the president's absence.

- Often serves as club program chair.
- Responsible for securing corporate sponsorship for an event, if necessary.
- Larger clubs may choose to have more than one vice president that manages a specific function within the club (see below).

Vice President/Director of Events:

- Oversees the logistics of planning and executing club events (with the support of the leadership team or additional volunteers who may serve as the main champions for particular events).
- Secures the event venue; submits any event-associated contracts to the school to be processed at least two weeks in advance; organizes food and beverage needs.
- Ensures the event runs smoothly on the day of the activity.

Secretary/Vice President/Director of Communications:

- Assists the president and club officers with required club paperwork and administrative tasks.
- May record formal board meeting minutes.
- Supervises all alumni club mailings and correspondence via the Alumni Club Portal.
- With the president, notifies the Offices of Alumni Relations about new alumni club leadership/election results.

Vice President/Director of Marketing:

- Manages the marketing of all club events and activities, ensuring that they are posted on the Alumni Club Portal and on social media, if applicable. Sends registration reminders and final participant details/agendas to program registrants.
- Creates event registration pages through the Alumni Club Portal, as needed.
- Handles marketing communications with other clubs that may be event co-sponsors, such as UM-AA, other Michigan Ross alumni or student clubs, or other local b-school alumni clubs.

Admissions or Career Chairs:

- Manage communications surrounding local Ross Admissions or Career Services activities, including corresponding with corresponding Michigan Ross contacts to support their activities in your region, bringing in the larger regional alumni club as needed.
- If Admissions Chair, liaise with Michigan Ross Admissions team and support prospected/admitted student events and outreach as needed.

- If Career Services Chair, liaise with Michigan Ross Career Development Office and Alumni Career Services staff to support alumni and student career programming and exploration.

Advisory Boards/Roles:

An advisory board is an appropriate addition for any club that may have alumni who would like to be involved in some capacity, but not as full officers. Advisory boards may provide a club with guidance or strategic advice, as well as useful connections and corporate sponsorships.

Advisory board members may consist of:

- Former club officers, especially club presidents
- Alumni with event venue or speaker connections
- High-level local alumni with limited schedules
- A current Ross student originally from your region or intending to work in that region who provides student insight for young alumni/student engagement planning

An advisory board should have a clearly defined role, meeting frequency, and, potentially, maximum size and term limits. Clubs should clearly delineate which members of the leadership team are responsible for communicating with and engaging the advisory board, and how often.