



Why does Chapter Affiliation Matter?

*Is your fellowship affiliated with InterVarsity? Chances are that it is not formally affiliated if you are on the leadership team and you don't know the answer to that question. No big deal? Think again. This document is to help you understand **WHY** and **HOW** to formally affiliate your campus group with [InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA](http://www.intervarsity.org).*

Why should we affiliate?

Affiliation with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA® begins with recognizing that the purpose and beliefs of your fellowship are in line with InterVarsity's national purpose and Basis of Faith. This assures students, parents, church leaders and friends that the local chapter stands for what they expect it to: sound biblical teaching, genuine communities of growing Christians who are passionate about reaching all segments of their campus with the gospel, and a heartbeat for missions.

Along with recognizing a common biblical commitment and mission, many groups affiliate with InterVarsity to take advantage of the resources we have as a national movement, such as:

- ✓ Pastoral care from staff ministers
- ✓ Local and regional training camps and conferences
- ✓ 20% off all t-shirts ordered from the InterVarsity online store
- ✓ Custom-designed urban and global mission programs

In addition, there are some not-so-obvious benefits from being affiliated with InterVarsity. One of the most important is **continuity**. The fellowship group you have nurtured to where it is today has a better chance of surviving the next turnover of student leaders if you have support to help prepare future leaders. Another benefit is **respect** from the campus administration. Many administrators look more favorably on a religious group that is affiliated with a national, reputable organization than they would on a local, independent group. Chapters also benefit from being **interdenominational**. Students and faculty from a variety of denominations find a home in our fellowships, united by a common basis of faith and a desire to nurture the faith of all students.

The framework that keeps our widespread fellowships connected is a team of gifted and dedicated staff and volunteers. Campus ministers stimulate student initiative; connect like-minded students with others regionally and nationally, and coach young believers toward maturity. While these staff members are dedicated to helping all Christian witness flourish on campus, they give their best attention to groups that want their help.

Many groups use "InterVarsity" as part of their chapter name for greater name recognition with incoming students. But it is not necessary to do so (many of our oldest and largest chapters do not). If you do, it is important to remember that InterVarsity is a copyright-protected name. We believe that it should be a reliable mark of the evangelical convictions and leadership quality of a group of campus Christians. So, if your group does carry the name "InterVarsity", you need to keep your affiliation up to date annually.

How can we do this?

Formal affiliation with InterVarsity is a simple, annual process in which the chapter's leaders review the group's guiding principles and convictions and affirm that they are in harmony with those of InterVarsity. Students often use this time to pray for their fellowship and discuss their core values and identity on campus. Groups with faculty sponsors find it a good time to include them in discussing the group's activities and outreach on campus. Then they sign the electronic Application for Chapter Affiliation, which includes our Doctrinal Basis, and the staff person emails it to the Area Director. Then the Area Director signs and dates the electronic document and emails it to ChapterAffiliations@intervarsity.org. The process is annual because student leaders change at least once a year.

Affiliation with InterVarsity is important and worthwhile. The application and sample constitution are at: <http://collegiateministries.intervarsity.org/chapter-affiliation>. (If this is the first time your chapter is affiliating, a chapter constitution and a Letter of Recognition from your college or university are required. Staff can look up the history of affiliation on the chapter portal if there is a question about status.)

Questions? Contact the Campus Ministries office: (608) 274-9001 or ChapterAffiliations@intervarsity.org.