



AMERICAN COUNSELING  
ASSOCIATION

## TALKING POINTS TO ACCOMPANY POWERPOINT “ACA Student Member Benefits”

At the suggestion of a counselor educator, ACA developed the Student membership PowerPoint presentation to be used by counselor educators in their classes. The following may be used as additional information to enhance the slides. Remember, there are hyperlinks where text is underlined which will take you directly to that part of the ACA website to further demonstrate the membership value. Please contact Denise Brown at [dbrown@counseling.org](mailto:dbrown@counseling.org) or 800-347-6647 x303/703-823-9800, x303 with comments, suggestions or questions about any of the material.

- Slide 1: **Title Page**
- Slide 2: **ACA Mission.** The mission of ACA serves as the guiding principle for all the Association undertakes. It reflects the purposes of ACA.
- Slide 3: **History of ACA.** In 1952 these four associations came together for the purpose of combining their resources to form one association. The National Vocational Guidance Association is now the National Career Development Association. The National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers became the Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors. The Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education is now the Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development. The American College Personnel Association is now a separate organization.
- Slide 4: **Counseling As A Career.** Describes the job outlook for professional counselors reflected in information from Department of Labor and Money Magazine.
- Slide 5: **ACA Liability Insurance included in membership for Master’s Degree Students. ACA new graduate members receive a 50% discount on their liability insurance premium.**
- Slide 6: **ACA Supports You!** Gives a high-level overview of how ACA supports counselors in their careers.
- Slide 7: **What Are Students Saying About ACA?** Testimonials from actual ACA student members. These are interspersed throughout the presentation.

## Education beyond the classroom / ACA Member Services & Benefits

Listing of services and benefits enjoyed by ACA student members. ACA has developed a number of member services and benefits to meet the needs of its members, especially its students, to keep them informed of the latest news and information in counseling.

- **Student Liability Insurance** – ACA student membership includes liability (“malpractice”) insurance to **ACA master’s level student members**.
  - **Professional Liability Coverage** – Master’s level ACA student members are protected up to \$1,000,000 for each claim, up to \$3,000,000 annual aggregate subject to a master policy aggregate.
  - **Legal Defense and Investigative Costs** – If Master’s level ACA student members are named in a malpractice lawsuit, an experienced malpractice attorney will be provided, if necessary. Legal expenses incurred to settle covered claims will be paid - WIN or LOSE. This is in addition to the limits of liability.
  - Coverage of the insurance will terminate:
    - ✓ If the ACA student membership is terminated or expires: the ACA membership expiration date is the policy expiration date.
    - ✓ If the student graduate from the master’s degree program, or
    - ✓ If the ACA master policy is non-renewed or cancelled.
    - ✓ For additional questions regarding the program, [click here](#) or contact ACA Member Services toll free at 1-800-347-6647, ext. 222 or 703-823-9800, ext. 222.
- **Year-round career services support** - Career counseling & employment opportunities are provided through ACA’s ACA’s career development specialist including resume and cover letter review and assistance. ACA’s Career Center at the conference is always one of the most visited booths.
- **Employment services through partnership with CareerBuilder** - Partnership with CareerBuilder.com offers members exclusive access to specially selected counseling jobs.
- **Free ethics and professional standards consultation** - ACA provides all members with access to free consultation from a staff professional on ethics and professional standards and conduct.
- **[ACA Code of Ethics](#)** - ACA sets the standard for professional practice through the ACA Code of Ethics. It was revised in 2005 and is a keystone of the counseling profession.
- **Liability insurance** – ACA has partnered with HPSO to provide students with affordable liability insurance.
- ACA’s monthly magazine, *Counseling Today*; quarterly journal of counseling research, *Journal of Counseling & Development* now accessible online; bi-weekly e-news bulletin, *ACAeNews*, and ACA’s website **counseling.org** provides up-to-date information and research in the world of counseling.

## ACA Member Services &

### Benefits

- Online library and resources for research
- Networking and mentoring opportunities
- Low student rates for conference registration
- Graduate Student Center, volunteer opportunities and special activities at the Annual Conference & Exposition
- Podcasts and Online Learning
- Grants and scholarships
- Support for building a private practice
- Leadership development and skill-building
- Affordable CE credits - Online courses available 24/7
- **Discounted Publications, books and videos** - ACA publishes 10-12 new books each year. Each member receives a copy of the latest Publications catalog. There is also an online bookstore.
- Listservs and interest groups just for students (another slide details the topics and interest areas)
- And much more...

Slide 11:

### ACA Conference & Exposition

ACA Annual Conference & Exposition held annually in March or April draws counselors from all over the world to participate in the more than 400 educational program sessions and an extensive products and services expo. A participant may choose to attend sessions that make up a Counseling Academy and receive a certificate. The ACA Conference & Exposition is the place for professional development, career and educational opportunities in the counseling profession, with a discounted student registration fee. There are also special activities for students such as the Graduate Student Lounge, student focus groups, networking opportunities and career counseling sessions.

Slide 12:

### Counseling.org – ACA Website

The ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org) is your entry to all that is happening at ACA and in the world of counseling. Visit the website often. You may join or renew online, update your personal profile and

- See the unique materials in the Members-Only section
- Purchase books and videos direct from ACA at a discount
- Participate in online learning
- Find the Code of Ethics online
- Access the Virtual Library with papers, tools, best practices and other counseling resources available 24/7
- Make use of the Career Center partnership with Career Builder

Slide 13:

### Student Learning, Networking & Leadership Opportunities in ACA

Students are the future of the profession and of ACA. ACA has made an effort to develop learning, networking and leadership opportunities in ACA.

- ACA Foundation Graduate Student Competition – This is an essay contest in which students respond to a professional issue question.

The winning entries receive various prizes such as ACA conference registration and cash.

- Ross Trust Scholarship – this contest features ACA memberships and other prizes to students selected as winners. The Ross Trust Scholarship is funded through the estate of Ms. Dorothy Ross who was a school counselor for many years. This program seeks to help those who endeavor to become professional counselors.
- Ethics competition – provides an opportunity for teams of masters’ and doctoral students to address a scenario with the potential of being an ethical dilemma. Prizes will be awarded to the top three masters’ teams and the top three doctoral teams.
- *New Perspectives* column in *Counseling* focuses on the challenges facing both counseling students and new professionals.
- Student representative to Governing Council - Each year a student representative is selected to serve on the ACA Governing Council. It provides an opportunity to participate in the governance of the Association.
- Student representative to committees. Student representatives are able to provide the student perspective to the work of the committee while also having an opportunity to participate in the work of the committee. Most committees meet by listserv or by conference call. Some committees hold meetings at the annual conference. Applications will be posted to the website and information will also appear in *Counseling Today*.
- Become a legislative advocate and get involved with Public Policy
- Volunteering at the ACA Annual Conference & Exposition (reduced registration fee) Student members are encouraged to apply to volunteer at the Annual Conference & Exposition in exchange for a reduced registration fee. Information can be found at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

Slide 14: **Public Policy & Legislation**

- Through its Public Policy and Legislation department, ACA advocates on Capitol Hill for funding and program support and works with Congress on professional and client issues.
- Advocacy
- Government Relations Listserv is maintained by the staff of the Public Policy and Legislation department to keep members informed of happenings on legislation of interest and to request action from members with their senators and representatives.

Slide 15: **Public Awareness**

Through its Public Awareness Committee and Public Relations department at ACA headquarters, ACA supports initiatives such as the Counseling Corner column, which appears in 222 newspapers nationwide to an audience of over 8.5 million readers, publicizing ACA’s response to Hurricane Katrina and Virginia Tech, producing counseling public service announcements like the one featuring Chris Knight, and supporting public awareness programs like Counseling Awareness Month in April.

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### **Online Special Interest Networks**

Interest Networks, approved by Governing Council, have been formed by 25 or more members who have an interest in a topic that is not currently being addressed through one of the Divisions. Their communication is primarily electronic. The current Interest Networks include:

- Children's Counseling Issues
- Grief and Bereavement
- Historical Issues in Counseling
- Advances in Therapeutic Humor
- Multiracial/Multiethnic Counseling Concerns
- Jewish Interests
- Sports Counseling
- Traumatology
- Women's Issues
- Professional Counselors in Schools
- Forensic Counseling
- Wellness

Slide 17:

**Organization of ACA.** ACA is organized into 19 specialty Divisions, 4 Regions and 56 Branches.

Slide 18:

**ACA Divisions.** ACA Divisions serve to enhance professional identity in a specific way and are organized around specific interest and practice areas. The number of Divisions has increased as the counseling profession has grown and changed. Each Division has its own president and governing body. Most of the Divisions have a newsletter and a journal.

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### **ACA Divisions.**

- Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education is concerned with assessment and testing issues, guidelines and standards.
- Association for Adult Development and Aging focuses on counseling concerns across the lifespan.
- Association for Creativity in Counseling focuses on the creative arts, relational and complementary therapies in counseling.
- American College Counseling Association focuses on college counseling and student development in higher education.
- Association for Counselors and Educators in Government is for counselors and educators in government and military-related agencies.
- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision focuses on the quality education and supervision of counselors for all work settings.
- Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Issues in Counseling provides education on issues related to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered clients.
- Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development is interested in improving cultural, ethnic and racial understanding in

counseling and defending human and civil rights as prescribed by law.

- American Mental Health Counselors Association advocates for mental health counselors in public and private practice.
- American Rehabilitation Counseling Association advocates for quality services and increased opportunities for people with disabilities.
- American School Counselor Association encourages interest in activities that affect personal, education and career development of students.
- Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling focuses on the role of spiritual, ethical, religious and other human values in counseling and development.
- Association for Specialists in Group Work supports standards, research and ethical practices for group work.
- Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development supports humanistic values, a belief in reason, education and knowledge in the service of mankind.
- Counselors for Social Justice promote individual and collective social responsibility.
- International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors is interested in issues related to addictions and/or criminal justice.
- International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors promotes excellence in the practice of couple and family counseling.
- National Career Development Association supports counselors in all settings focusing on career development.
- National Employment Counseling Association is dedicated to helping people prepare for, enter, understand and progress in the world of work.

Slide 21: **ACA Regions.** At fall regional meetings, the four Regions provide leadership training, conduct business and elect officers. The 56 Branches are divided among the four Regions. The Region meetings also provide an opportunity for networking among Branch leaders.

The four Regions are:

- Midwest with 13 Branches
- North Atlantic with 14 Branches
- Southern with 14 Branches
- Western with 14 Branches

Slide 22: **Map of ACA Regions**

Slide 23: **ACA Branches.** There are 56 Branches in the U.S. and abroad that serve as a mechanism for counselors in a geographic area to join together to carry out the purposes of the American Counseling Association. Each Branch has its own president and governing body who work to provide leadership opportunities, professional development, publications,

advocacy for counseling issues within its jurisdiction and provide recognition for members.

Slide 24: **ACA Governing Council.** Governing Council, the governing body of ACA, provides strategic leadership for the association. It is composed of nationally elected ACA officers, an appointed treasurer, one representative from each division and region and a student representative. The term of office is three years, except for the student representative. The Governing Council meets twice a year – once in the fall and again at the site of the ACA Annual Conference.

Slide 25: **ACA Committees.** Much of ACA's work is carried out by committees of members appointed to serve three year terms. There are student positions on almost every committee. The Committees include: Awards, Branch Development, Bylaws and Policies, Ethics, Financial Affairs, Human Rights, International, Interprofessional, Nominations and Election, Professional Standards, Public Awareness and Support, Public Policy and Legislation, Publications, Research and Knowledge and Strategic Planning

Slide 26: **ACA Contact Information**