

The Section–Student Branch connection

by J. Patrick Donohoe

Changes to the fundamental relationship between IEEE Sections and Student Branches are on the horizon in 2019. The aim of these changes is to improve the vitality of both entities by creating an effective connection between a Student Branch and its parent Section, thus providing significant benefits to both Members and Student Members alike.

The IEEE is encouraging a tighter coupling of each Student Branch to the organization through its parent Section, which is responsible for mentoring the Student Branch. The parent Section is responsible for providing students with a clear view of the IEEE as a whole and informing students of the value of IEEE membership as a professional.

All Student Branch members are automatically members of the parent Section and welcome to attend all Section meetings and events. Section meetings, presented by a wide variety of experts, can be technical or nontechnical in nature. Meeting examples include tours of local industry, meetings focused on continuing education and professional development, and social events. The Section may also include Chapters of specific technical Societies in the IEEE with meetings focused on the technical area of the associated Society.

To enhance communication between the Student Branch and its parent Section, the IEEE is modifying the Student Branch reporting process for 2019. Currently, Student Branches submit the following reports to the IEEE Member and Geographic Activities (MGA) Board: 1) a new officer report and 2) an annual report summarizing Student Branch activities for the academic year. In the future, Student Branches will report directly to the parent

Section. The Student Branch annual report will be replaced by simple online activity reports that are submitted as the activities occur, thus eliminating the end-of-the-year reporting burden on Student Branch officers. In addition to the new officer report, each Student Branch will submit an annual plan of events to the Section, allowing the Section to stay abreast of branch activities. The IEEE encourages Student Branches to solicit input from the Section leadership when generating the annual plan of events.

A team of two Section volunteers, who are members of the Section Executive Committee (ExCom), is tasked with working closely with the branch officers and branch counselor to ensure an effective Section–Student Branch connection. The Section Student Activities chair (SSAC), an active Section member, is responsible for ensuring that the Student Branches are engaged in activities of interest to their members, students interact with Section members and are exposed to the larger IEEE, and Student Branches are working to further the goals of their parent organizations within the IEEE (Region, MGA, and so forth).

All students in the branch(es) of the parent Section are represented on the Section ExCom by the Section student representative (SSR), an active student member in a Student Branch of the Section. The SSR provides the student perspective on the Section ExCom and works closely with the SSAC to ensure that the activities of the branch(es) are of interest to students.

Visit <https://www.ieee.org/membership/students/index.html> for more information on the Section–Student Branch connection.

About the author

J. Patrick Donohoe (p.donohoe@ieee.org) is the IEEE Member and Geographic Activities chair–Student Activities.



The IEEE is encouraging a tighter coupling of each Student Branch to the organization through its parent Section.