



ACM Student Chapter Excellence Awards Application

Chapter Group ID: 46401
Name of Chapter: State University of NY/Buffalo
Chapter Address: University at Buffalo, 338 Davis Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260
URL for your Chapter homepage: http://ubacm.org/
Category you are applying for: Outstanding Chapter Website

Chapter Officers

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Membership Chair (if applicable): _____
Email: _____
Web Master (if applicable): _____
Email: _____



Please provide a brief description of your chapter and school including number of chapter members (1500 character maximum):

University at Buffalo (UB) is a public research university located in Buffalo, NY, under the State University of New York system. As of 2017, UB has 30,648 total attending students, with 21,020 as undergraduate students. UB houses 13 colleges, one of which is the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. The engineering college, founded in 1946, is a member of Association of American Universities (AAU), and has eight different academic departments that offer a variety of engineering programs for students from 30 different U.S. states and 65 countries around the world.

UB ACM was founded in 2004, and focuses on helping students find their path in computer science, either in academia or industry. Our chapter events range from technical events with varying complexity to social events to allow members to network and meet peers with similar interests. We currently have over 600 verified UB students registered on our Slack workspace, which serves as both our club's newsletter and a discussion medium. From Fall of 2017 to now, we had 187 unique students visit our in person events. All in all, we are an inclusive community of students passionate about computer science and software engineering that hopes to improve ourselves and others.

Number of students at your school who take computer science and related courses, and typical majors of your chapter members (1000 character maximum):

UB ACM's main demographic of majors are Computer Science and Computer Engineering. As of Fall 2017, University at Buffalo has 1133 students enrolled as Computer Science and Computer Engineering majors or minors..

The number of students who take computer science courses is much larger, as the introduction to computer science courses are popular across discipline. However that number is not publicly available from our school.

Source: <https://engineering.buffalo.edu/home/academics/undergrad/data.html>



An essay on the category for which your chapter would like to be considered (4000 character maximum - approximately 500 words):

Our chapter's website has gone through several revisions over the past few years. We've tried several versions with varying content on our website until we came to what we have now today. We went from a static site, to a dynamic one with an administration dashboard, back to a static site, to what we have now.

Our current web presence is built with four components that serve different purposes to the different demographic of students. The main static website (<http://ubacm.org/>) is the face of our chapter's online presence, as well as a starting point for everyone interested in joining our chapter. The resume portal is for existing members to share their resumes with other members or sponsors. The check-in server is used for keeping track of members who visit our in-person events and sharing that data with the other components. The Slack bot is an intermediary server that allow members to interact with the check-in server from our chapter's Slack workspace.

Our main static website plays the biggest part of our chapter's online presence. An important consideration we took into account when we designed our new site is to make sure it is professional, easy to navigate, and filled with useful content.

UB ACM plays a huge role in the University at Buffalo's Computer Science and Engineering department, so we are careful with how we represent ourselves on the website. Our website uses a pseudo-flat design that looks clean, modern, and professional. We took the color palette from our school's style guide as a base for designing our pages. By using our school's colors, it gives our website authenticity and familiarity to new visitors who might've been visited our site from the school's club listing or received the URL from tabling events. For the chapter website's design, we decided to use large hero images and colors more liberally to give it a more creative and playful look.

We wanted to fill the website with content to showcase our chapter, for prospective students who are interested in attending UB, current students interested in joining our chapter, and alumni and sponsors to learn more about what our club is doing. The chapter leadership keeps the Latest Updates section on the index page and the Event Schedule page updated on a weekly basis. Existing students can check their attendance marks through an embedded dynamic React app that fetches data from the check-in server. Interested students can also visit our Stay Updated page to learn more on how to get the latest information on our chapter and join our Slack workspace. Next to the button to join our Slack workspace, a Community Code of Conduct page to let all of our members know that our club is inclusive and respectful to everyone and we will not tolerate any behaviors that threaten or harm anyone.

As for how the static website is built, it uses Node.js and Metalsmith to generate static distribution files. Webpack is used as a development dependency to compile the embedded React application used within parts of the static website for dynamic content. The stylesheet for the static website uses some open source frameworks, but the rest of the styling is designed and built from the ground up with Sass. The site is set up with continuous integration on Travis CI to automatically update the live website to the latest version of on the master branch in version control.

Our website evolved with the transformation of our chapter from a few members to the hundreds that we support today. The new infrastructure we've built for our chapter has helped with many communication and logistical issues, but we always have room for improvement. The volunteer work the members of UB ACM put into building our online presence truly improved UB ACM for the better.