

Young Jains of America: Guidelines for Your YJA Affiliated Chapter

“Young Jains of America will aspire to impart the Jain heritage to the next generation.”

Table of Contents:

- I. Jai Jinendra!
- II. Chapter Requirements and Goals
- III. Timeline and Process
- IV. Logo and Name Usage Rules
- V. Resources and Benefits
- VI. Education Handbook
- VII. Events Handbook
- VIII. College Chapters Directory

Jai Jinendra!

Young Jains of America is excited to welcome you as an official YJA Affiliated Chapter. The YJA College Chapter Project has been a long time in the works, and we are very excited to have you on board.

We hope to offer all sorts of resources to your Jain student organization to ensure that you can hold interactive and engaging sessions and social events. Whether you are a new Jain student organization, just getting started, or are a well-established organization on campus, Young Jains of America is here to support your organization to make it as successful as it can be.

The Director of Publications is your organization's primary contact for anything you need from YJA. Please email collegechapters@yja.org with any questions, concerns, or help with developing events.

The Director of Education is also a resource for your organization. Please email education@yja.org, and cc collegechapters@yja.org, for any Jainism-related questions you may have, or if you would like help in developing educational content for a specific event.

As such, please remember that as an official YJA Affiliated Chapter, you are representing the organization of Young Jains of America as a whole on the college level. We are 100% behind your organization, and we are glad to have you as one of our YJA Affiliated Chapters - welcome!

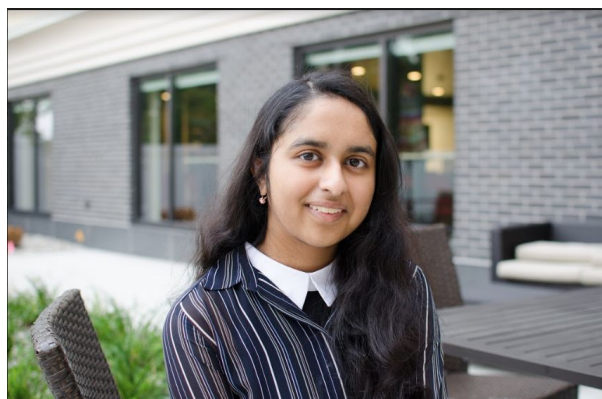
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Chapter Requirements and Goals

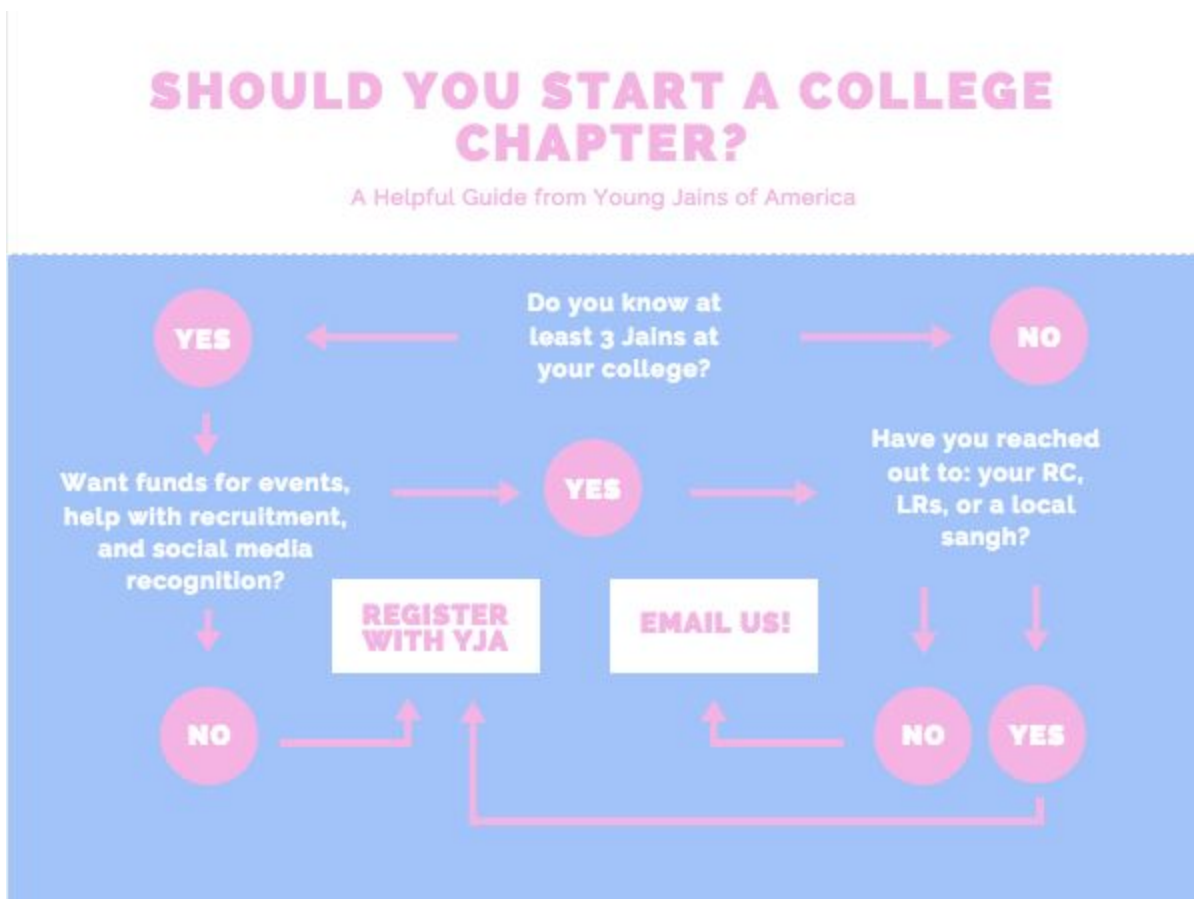
There are some requirements that your Jain student organization needs to meet in order to maintain the “YJA Affiliated” status. Please see the following requirements, and keep in mind that these requirements are meant to encourage your organization to remain active and successful!

Requirement: No alcohol/drugs/meat products of any kind are allowed at any of your YJA Affiliated Chapter’s events. This is a zero tolerance policy, and we will not allow any flexibility with this requirement. Your organization is representing Jainism and YJA on the college level, and we pride ourselves on upholding our Jain ethics and values.

Goals:

- We highly recommend that you hold religious, social, and volunteering events each year.
- Religious, volunteering, and social will overlap at some events, but we suggest that there be three separate events with each of these types as the primary focus.
- The interfaith event (recommended at least once a year) should consist of you working with another, or multiple, faith-based organizations on campus to hold an event, panel, or informal dinner to constructively discuss religion and cooperation. There is much flexibility with this, so get creative!

Timeline and Process:



[Registration Form](#)

Email: collegechapters@yja.org

2018-2019 Calendar

Beginning of Semester 1

College Chapters Google Hangouts
Discuss your plans for the upcoming semester, potential collaborations, and successes and difficulties your chapter is facing.

Paryushan and Das Lakshan

October 1

World Vegetarian Day

Middle of Semester 1

College Chapters Google Hangouts

November 1

World Vegan Day

November 7	Diwali
Beginning of Semester 2	College Chapters Google Hangouts
Middle of Semester 2	College Chapters Google Hangouts
April 17	Mahavir Jayanti
May 1	To maintain YJA Affiliated status for the next year, re-register your organization by May 1 via this re-registration form .
July 4th Weekend	JAINA 2019

Funding and Reimbursements

We require that you first apply to your school for funding. At the beginning of the academic year or upon receiving the YJA College Chapter Guide, please send documentation of your chapter's registration details, financial support from the university, and any fundraising estimates to finance@yja.org. YJA must receive proof of rules and receipt of the funding from the chapter's respective university before it can apply for funding and reimbursement.

For any event that you would like funding for from YJA, please fill out this **budget form** at least 2-3 weeks before the event! YJA will then follow up with you regarding the funding approval. After the event, we request that you submit receipts and event documentation accompanied by **this reimbursement form**. **Download the file to Excel, fill it out, and then send the Excel file back to us. Please make sure to provide a correct and secure mailing address where we can mail the reimbursement checks.** After we receive your receipts and event documentation, we will provide the reimbursement.

- In general:
 - YJA will fund: any pre-approved budget allocations that abide by the YJA College Chapter Guidelines
 - YJA will not fund: events on a retroactive basis; items described in insufficient detail; costs without accurate documentation or items added for padding overall cost.

Logo and Name Usage Rules:

Logo

YJA will be providing your organization with a college chapters-wide logo next semester. You are not required to use the logo and may feel free to use your current logo.

The purpose of the logo is for your organization to use on your event fliers, cover photos for Facebook events, and more. We encourage you to use it to show that you're a YJA-Affiliated Chapter! At the same time, please be mindful of using the logo, and be sure that whatever event you're holding is representative of YJA and Jainism in the best way possible.

Please do not alter the image in any way. The logo has been standardized across all YJA Affiliated Chapters.

Using the logo is highly encouraged, but entirely optional.

Name

Please use "YJA Affiliated Chapter" and do not use "YJA" or "Young Jains of America" on its own. This is for liability reasons. (For instance, name your chapter "[College Name] Jain (Student) Association" rather than "Young Jains of America" on its own.)

We encourage you to use "**Jain Student Organization Name* - a YJA Affiliated Chapter" for your organization's official title, but as with the logo, you are not required to use the "YJA Affiliated Chapter" name and may continue to use your current organization's name as is!

Resources and Benefits:

We want your YJA Affiliated Chapter to be the best possible, so below are plenty of resources and benefits for you simply because you're a YJA Affiliated Chapter!

Tips for Starting a Chapter

1. Member Recruitment
 - a. Reach out to local sanghs. They may be able to connect you with more Jains at your college as well as provide advice and suggestions for events!
 - b. Email YJA! We can help connect you with other Jains at your school as well as provide funds and ideas for new member and recruitment activities.
 - c. General Ideas
 - i. Quarter cards and handouts about YJA/your chapter
 - ii. An info session with free food for prospective members
 - iii. Use social media to spread the word
2. Establish a communication channel between your members (eg. GroupMe, Facebook).
3. Gauge your members' time commitment.
 - a. It's important to know going into the year how many events are feasible, while being flexible in case time commitments change!

Your YJA Friends:

1. Throughout the year, you can request 1-on-1 advising calls with YJA for anything you might need help with by emailing collegechapters@yja.org.
2. *YJA Regional Coordinators (RCs) and Local Representatives (LRs)*: If you would like to pair up with your RC or an LR from your area to plan an event, such as a Navkar Jaap, please email your respective RC (south@yja.org, southeast@yja.org, northeast@yja.org, west@yja.org, midwest@yja.org, midatlantic@yja.org) and cc collegechapters@yja.org. You can find out which region your organization is by going to regions tab on the YJA website.
3. *YJA's publication, Young Minds*: You can write on any topic of your choice, whether it be about how you implement Jainism in college or cool Jain recipes you know. If interested, email youngminds@yja.org.
4. *YJA website*: All of our chapters are listed on the YJA website with links to websites/ social media accounts and chapter descriptions. We want to help you recruit as many members as possible. If any revisions need to be made, email collegechapters@yja.org.
5. *YJA Social Media*: We feature YJA Chapters that go above and beyond on our social media accounts! Whether you're a new organization or an established one, we'll feature chapters that put on a unique event, work with their local Jain center, show the most progress, try something new, and anything else that shows a chapter is doing great things! Please share event pictures or any initiatives your College Chapter is involved in with pr@yja.org.

Education Handbook

I. Jain Resources

- 1) [Jain Academic Bowl Manual](#)
 - a) All of the major topics in the Jaina Education Series (JES) Books from the more basic topics of what it means to be a Jain to complex principles such as a breakdown of Anekantvad
- 2) [Jain Philosophy PDF](#)
 - a) The important tenets of Jain Philosophy along with some history of how and why Jainism came to be as it is today
- 3) [Atma Siddhi English Translation](#) by Shrimad Rajchandra
 - a) Many Jain scholars have said the essence of Jainism lies in this 142 verse poem
 - b) It contains 6 fundamental truths of the soul that lead to self realization
 - c) A video version of the translation can be found [here!](#)
- 4) [Interfaith FAQs](#)
 - a) 10 general questions and responses to clarify Jainism's standpoint on certain religious beliefs asked by a Christian pastor to the YJA Education Team

II. Main Events

Paryushan and Das Lakshan:

- 1) Jain Meals
 - a) Reach out to your local Sangh to see if they provide Jain Meals
- 2) Samvatsari Pratikraman
 - a) You can hold an English Pratikraman with a small group of Jains, reading English translations of the main Sutras
 - b) [This file](#) contains the essence of the Pratikraman - reading it aloud in a group is a great alternative if you cannot make the trip to a Derasar for the Samvatsari Pratikraman

Mahavir Jayanti:

- 1) Mahavir Jayanti Puja
 - a) If you have someone who knows the Sutras to the Chaityavandan, you can go through it together
 - b) If not, a very auspicious thing to do on this day is go through [Mahavir Swami's 27 lives](#)
- 2) Visit your local Derasar
 - a) All Derasars and local Sanghs celebrate Mahavir Jayanti with a lecture, the chance to give your respect to Mahavir Swami's birth, and a cultural show
 - b) Try to organize a visit to your [local Derasar/Sangh](#) with your Chapter

III. Jain Discussions

Topics include (these were used by one of the first YJA College Chapters):

- 1) Consciousness: What is consciousness? What is the purpose of Yoga and in what ways does it alter our consciousness? Is there more to our awareness than science believes?
- 2) Culture: Can culture (ingrained but outdated belief systems that no longer serve a relevant purpose) be the cause of our downfall as human beings? Does this cause us to stay asleep, unaware of the true nature of reality?
- 3) Paryushan and Das Lakshan: What is its significance and how should it be incorporated into our lives?
- 4) 12 Bhavanas: What do the 12 Contemplations in Jainism signify and how are they relevant to our lives today?
- 5) Diet/Vegetarianism: Why do we practice our diets, and what does it mean to us? How can we practice ahimsa (non-violence) through what we choose to eat? As times change, should our diet adapt as well? What do we do about inconsistencies?
- 6) Careers: What do you want out of your career? How do we choose careers that are consistent with our principles?
- 7) Mental and physical health: What does mental health mean to me? To us as a community? What are the challenges and factors we should consider?
- 8) Technology: How does it affect our lives and how has it changed our interactions with others? What good has it done and in what ways has it caused problems? What does the future look like?
- 9) Gratitude: How can we be more thankful and appreciative of what we have?
- 10) More topics for discussion can be found here: convention.yja.org/sessions

IV. Start a Blog!

It's really easy to create a blog on Wordpress; you can even model it after this one - pennhja.wordpress.com. Accept submissions from everyone and post bi-monthly or monthly for all your readers! Spread the word on your GroupMe or Facebook Group!

V. TED Talks/Videos

Watch and discuss the following videos that have large connections to Jainism

- 1) The Power of Empathy - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysqFHuICt0w>
- 2) Science & Religion - https://youtu.be/N0--_R6xThs
- 3) This Is Water Speech by DFW - <https://vimeo.com/68855377>
- 4) Disadvantages Can Improve the Chance of Success by Malcolm Gladwell - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXTZ6SOVmdo>
- 5) Speeches by Alan Watts (You're It, Time to Wake Up) - <https://youtu.be/fcPWU59Luoc>; <https://youtu.be/jk5i4GX1BJY>
- 6) Inception and Philosophy by Kyle Johnson - <https://youtu.be/ginQNMiRu2w>

VI. Jainism in Movies

Hold Movie Nights with others at your College and discuss how these amazing, inspirational movies bring together many concepts found within Jainism and other religions around the world:

Inception	Interstellar	The Matrix	Cloud Atlas	Fight Club
The Fountain	Batman	Lucy	Her	Mr. Nobody
Butterfly Effect	300	Shutter Island	K-Pax	Being John Malkovich
Donnie Darko	Planet of the Apes	District 9	Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind	V for Vendetta

VII. Games

- 1) Jain Jeopardy - [Website](#)
- 2) Jain Feud
- 3) Jain Academic Bowl

Events Handbook

I. Social

A. Ultimate Frisbee

1. Make a picnic out of it or simply get “ultimaniac” - get some students together, go to an open field on campus, and play some Ultimate Frisbee! This is always a well attended event.

B. Chai and Cram/Cocoa and Cram

1. During finals week, organize a study session and provide cocoa or some classic masala chai to get everyone in one area studying together.

C. Attend a VegFest

1. Many states and major cities have vegetarian/vegan festivals - coordinate with some students and attend the festival together.

D. Game Night

1. Organize a night full of mafia, Avalon, board games, and cards.

E. Holiday Lights

1. Find out where there are winter lights being shown, and plan an event around this.

F. Mini Golf/Ice Skating/etc.

1. Find some students and go play golf or go ice skating!

G. Scavenger Hunt

1. Hide clues around campus and divide students up into different teams. Send them around on a scavenger hunt, and the winning team gets a small prize.
2. You can make this Jain by making the clues about Jainism.

H. Study Sessions

1. It can be hard to find study rooms during finals, so have the organization reserve a large study room, and everyone can simply come together and study.

I. Attend a YJA Regional Retreat

II. Religious

A. English pratikraman

1. You can choose to do this on a regular basis, perhaps once a month.
2. If you don't have anyone to lead the pratikraman, try finding a live stream or recorded pratikraman [online](#). We can help you!

B. Diwali pooja

1. Organize a pooja for Diwali, followed by a nice Jain meal or doing rangoli, etc.

C. Navkar Jaap

1. You can pair up with your respective YJA regional coordinator, and organize a jaap on campus, where everyone gets together and

continuously says the Navkar Mantra for 108 times. This is often done during Thanksgiving to pray for the lives of turkeys lost.

D. Mahavir Jayanti

1. Provide details/arrange transportation for some campuses to attend near celebrations
2. Come up with a way to celebrate on campus - potentially do a puja, followed by a brief presentation of Mahavir Swami and his life

E. Interfaith roundtable

1. We highly encourage this event. Reach out to another religious organization on campus and organize an event where students of both religious can come together and discuss certain topics.
2. This can expand to multiple religious organizations as well.

F. Dharma Dialogues

1. Regular discussions
2. Keep them flexible and open to anyone
3. Topics can be pre-decided or spontaneous

G. Paryushan

1. Provide subsidized meals for your members and other students at nearby universities
2. Organize Pratikraman

H. Paryushan Picnic

1. Outdoor picnic with Paryushan-friendly food
2. Have 10 students present on the ten different Das Lakshan virtues, followed by discussion

III. Volunteering

A. Wintertime volunteer event

1. Pick a local non-profit organization and contact them to volunteer! For example, you can help pass out meals to the homeless or make brown bags for them; however, we do encourage that you pass out vegetarian meals. You can choose to do this for Christmas or any other day during the holidays.

B. Temple Clean Up

1. Reach out to your Regional Coordinator (RC) and plan a visit to the local Jain temple to help clean up. Vacuum the carpets, wipe down the white boards/chalk boards inside pathshala classrooms, clean the kitchen, etc.

C. Mentoring Program - Jain2Jain

1. Consider starting a mentoring program with the high school/middle school kids at the local Jain temple. After reaching out to the Executive Committee at the mandir, pair up members in your organization to kids at the temple for professional, career, and personal guidance.

D. College Networking Event

1. Select 5 students representing different majors and career paths from your organization and hold a panel at the local Jain center. Invite high schoolers to attend the event where you can discuss the college application process, scholarships, essay tips, and major declarations. Afterwards, have an informal Q&A for the attendees to ask questions.
2. Consider partnering up with another Jain college organizations to bring a variety of universities on the panel.

E. Bakesale

1. Organize a vegan/vegetarian/Jain-friendly bake sale on your campus, and donate the proceeds to an organization of your choice.

F. Plant a Vegetable Garden

1. As simple as it sounds, Jainism promotes going green, so plant a vegetable garden somewhere on campus or somewhere else (senior-citizen home, local Jain mandir, etc.)

G. Ahimsa Walk

1. Organize an “Ahimsa” or “Non-Violence” walk by having students on campus register to participate in the walk, and donate the proceeds to an organization that fights against animal cruelty, or another organization that promotes non-violence.

IV. Intercollegiate

A. College Jain Academic Bowl (JAB)

1. Team up with another YJA-affiliated chapter, and organize a competition where colleges compete against each other to answer questions about Jainism. Feel free to email education@yja.org if you would like ideas for questions.

B. Webinars/debates

1. Via Skype/Google Hangouts/etc., organize a debate between your student organization and another Jain student organization to discuss a Jain topic of your choice, and have each college pick a side to debate.

VII. College Chapter Directory

Connect with other YJA College Chapters across the country for advice or to plan collaborative events and campaigns!

College	Chapter Email	Contact People	Email	Phone
Columbia University	ahimsa@columbia.edu	President: Sohum Shah VP: Binita Shah	sss2249@columbia.edu bs2924@columbia.edu	(609) 575-0240 (516) 306-8299
University of Pennsylvania	pennhja@gmail.com	Co-Presidents: Parth Shah and Tanvi Patel VP: Ram Godse Jain Chair: Sohum Daftary	sohumdaftary@wharton.upenn.edu	(972) 974-8020, but Facebook Messenger is the best way to get in touch
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia	usci.yju@gmail.com	President: Rikita Doshi	rdoshi@mail.usciences.edu	(516) 318-9855
Virginia Commonwealth University		President: Palak Shah Vice President: Dhaval Shah	palak52@yahoo.com dmsyankees@gmail.com	(703) 334-1040 (571) 327-7261
University of Pittsburgh	jsa.pitt@gmail.com			
University of Illinois	jsa.illinois@gmail.com	Satej Shah Janak Shah	satejshah@gmail.com janaksha@gmail.com	(339) 234-1023
University of Michigan	JainStudents@umich.edu	Sheily Shah	shahhs@umich.edu	(734) 846-6337
Boston University	jiva@bu.edu	Pranali Shah	pranalis@bu.edu	(212) 300-3033
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