You’ve worked hard talking to potential members, putting flyers up across campus, and holding informational sessions about your organization. You’ve successfully met your membership recruitment goal! Now that you have members, here’s the challenge: How do you keep or retain members in your organization? How do you get members active in events, activities, and programs?

Members’ Needs
Ask members why they joined the organization and what they want to get out of their experience. For an accounting organization, members might want to build a network of professionals in the business world. For a sports club, a member’s motivation might be to socialize with students who also enjoy participating in the same athletic events. Whatever the motivation for joining your organization is, it is important to understand and consider members’ needs when developing programs, activities, and even meetings.

The GRAPE Principle lists the 5 most common reasons people join organizations: Growth, Recognition, Achievement, Participation, and Enjoyment. This method can help you to reflect your organization’s current efforts and brainstorm new methods for keeping members active in your organization. With each element of GRAPE, think about the following:

- Why did you and other members join the organization?
- What are reasons you and other members have stayed with the organization?
- What strategies can you use to keep or retain members in your organization?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROWTH</th>
<th>RECOGNITION</th>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT</th>
<th>PARTICIPATION</th>
<th>ENJOYMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having opportunities to increase your skills and competencies, personal skill development opportunities, becoming more competent, experienced, and confident.</td>
<td>Gaining respect from others you admire, receiving recognition and praise for a job well done, receiving feedback on your work within the organization.</td>
<td>Having the opportunity to solve problems, seeing the result of your efforts, being given meaningful responsibilities, seeing your feedback and ideas become reality.</td>
<td>Planning and scheduling work, given the opportunity and being allowed to make or contribute in important decision making, being &quot;active&quot; not just a member.</td>
<td>Having fun, working as part of a team, feeling a part of something important.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Membership Over the Years
Consider the different priorities, characteristics and commitments that your members may have based on their years in school. Also consider the characteristics that graduate students, transfer students, and adult students bring to your group. Are you meeting the needs of your members based on their student status? If not, how can you better cater to this status?

Adapted from: Recruitment and Retention workshop
Revised May 13, 2015