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### **Consulting Services for Higher Education Reform**

# **RECOMMENDATION FOR ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS` MANAGEMENT**

## **Partnership**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT

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## Introduction

The heart of a strong alumni organization is a small group of dedicated men who make the organization work by their leadership, energy, and effort. This group usually serves as a board of trustees of the chapter's alumni organization. If this group works effectively, the entire alumni organization will be effective and the chapter will be a strong one. Participating on your alumni association board should be an enjoyable experience. This handbook is concerned with the organization, direction, and programs of this core alumni group.

What are the criteria for an efficient alumni group? One measure is the standing of the chapter on its own campus.

A second criterion for a good alumni organization is the level of support provided in an annual fund drive. An alumni organization should aim to have a minimum of 20% of its alumni contributing each year in order to give the chapter a firm base of support and interest.

A third measure of a strong alumni organization is the amount of money raised each year. Even if the chapter does not need funds right now, it is sensible to maintain the interest and to promote the habit of giving. Extra funds can always be used as scholarships or in support of literary programs. Or, they can be added to the endowment as a cushion against major capital emergencies or difficult times on campus.

The scope of an alumni association's role makes it difficult to define beyond the most general terms. It is important that we attempt, however, to provide a practical definition that fraternity alumni organizations may use in setting their goals, planning their approach, and measuring their effectiveness. The successful alumni organization has an understanding of the broad parameters of its job, as well as clearly defined goals. Among college fraternities, there are wide variations in both size and mode of operation.

This recommendation provides guidelines and idea sources. There are a variety of situations which can impact the design of your Alumni Association such as geographic distribution of alumni, size and age of the chapter, and other factors. Those factors may require modifications of this Alumni Association Recommendation for your chapter. Some positions might be consolidated. The important aspects are getting more people involved in working with and advising the various aspects of chapter life and performance, defining areas of responsibility, and tailoring the program so it is workable for your chapter and the alumni members who will be involved.

## Building the board of trustees

We recommend a board of 9 to 15 active trustees. They should be elected to 3-year terms, with one-third elected each year. Three to four persons will be inactive each year due to illness, family problems, business pressures, etc., but you will still have a large enough group to conduct business efficiently. The group will not be too large because the board will be subdivided into committees as outlined below. If necessary, the executive committee will handle the day-to-day decisions.

The keys to a successful board are strong officers, particularly a chief executive officer or officers. The president and/or the chairman must be prepared to devote 4 to 6 hours per week to the organization, particularly during the initial reorganization phases.

The Board should plan to have a minimum of 2 meetings per year at the Chapter, and should involve Chapter officers at each meeting. A monthly meeting is desirable if practical.

### **Identifying potential board members**

Good board members can be found among the following groups: regular contributors; brothers who return regularly to chapter functions; past chapter officers; brothers who have children in college or about to enter; brothers with a major reunion upcoming. In general, it is relatively easy to obtain trustees under 30 years of age (they are not yet deeply involved in their careers), or trustees of retirement age (they have the time). It is extremely difficult to obtain quality persons in the 30 to 60 age range who have career and family pressures. Yet, these persons are vital to the health of the board.

Aim for several trustees from each decade. This will give you a broad range of experience on the board, and (assuming board meetings coincide with larger alumni functions) it will provide “someone I know” for brothers of all generations. Several board members should live near the chapter.

### **Recruiting board members**

How do you attract quality persons to the board? Most persons will respond to either an honor or a challenge. If the chapter is in good shape, then the trustee position should be presented as an honor and emphasis placed on the importance of continuing the tradition of excellence. If the chapter is in bad shape, then the challenge of rebuilding the chapter should be emphasized.

We recommend a personal solicitation letter which does the following things at a minimum:

1. Clearly defines the extent of the job (time, meetings, etc.);
2. Stresses that it is a working board;
3. Defines any implicit or explicit financial obligations.

The membership of the board should be “weeded” regularly, particularly during the early years of the organization. You often find good trustees by trial and error, and you cannot carry your “errors” too long without hurting the organization. If a person is not fulfilling his obligations, discrete inquiry should be made into the causes. If temporary, he can be continued. If the poor performance continues, then he should be eased off the board as tactfully as possible.

The following could also be considered: Дараах зүйлсийг анхааран үзэж болно:

1/3rd from older alumni (graduated 20+ years)

1/3rd from younger alumni (graduated 1-19 years)

1/3rd from current chapter officers

## Organizing the board

### Overview

Once selected, the board should adopt rules governing its procedures, including: the number of meeting per year, attendance requirements, etcetera. These rules should be sent to all board members and reviewed at the beginning of each year. The board should plan to meet once a month or once every two months if the alumni organization and/or the chapter has problems. This also helps develop momentum and a sense of urgency. Once the board is functioning smoothly, meetings are probably needed only two or three times a year.

The board should be divided into at least six permanent committees: Alumni Relations, Chapter Relations, Finance and Membership, Nominations, House and Property, and Scholarship and Literary Activities. Other permanent or temporary committees may be created to suit the particular character of the chapter.

The responsibilities of each committee should be clearly defined in writing. Each brother should be given the opportunity to select the committee on which he will serve and to which he feels he can contribute the most.

### Undergraduate involvement

The chapter's committee system should parallel the board's committees. The chapter may well have some additional committees (Social, Initiation, Rushing, etc.), which the board does not have, but these "extra" Chapter committees should report to one of the board committees (likely a Alumni Relations Committee). Every chapter member should belong to one or more chapter committees. A full list of the membership of the chapter committees should be given to the board at the beginning of each academic year. The chapter committees, of course, will meet regularly during the year and meet jointly with board committees on retreat weekends.

We recommend that the undergraduates participate actively with the Alumni Board, particularly at the committee level. The Alumni Committee should meet jointly before the full Alumni Board meets. At the full board meeting, the chapter officers and committee chairs attend with the rights to speak, but not to vote.

The alumni and the chapter should have a written agreement between them expressing the mutual rights and responsibilities of both sides. It should be reviewed by the board each year, and its officers authorized to sign it by a formal vote. It should be signed in a formal ceremony giving the document as much significance as possible.

The written agreement lists everything that the alumni will do for the chapter each year. It also lists everything the chapter is supposed to do for the alumni and is supposed to do in order to maintain (or improve) the chapter's quality. The lease has a blank space at the end of each designating which officer or committee chairman is responsible for seeing that this particular item is accomplished. The agreement also requires the chapter to provide several attachments: a complete list of chapter

members and their contact information, a list of all chapter committees and members, and annual budget (approved in advance by the board), etc. Other items may be added as necessary.

In time, this agreement becomes the storehouse of the collected wisdom acquired through the years of running a fraternity house. Each time a new problem arises, an adjustment can be made in the agreement and it remains in force for future years. Traditionally, one problem with the undergraduate chapter is that its leadership changes every few years, and one must constantly reeducate the new group. The same often applies to alumni organizations. The hard-won lessons learned during a financial or other crisis tend to be forgotten as these brothers leave the board and new persons join. Consequently, ten years down the line, the same mistakes recur. An agreement helps limit the mistakes both by the chapter and the board.

## Formal Recognition

In order to become a formally recognized Alumni Association of the UNIVERSITY, several criteria must be completed. These criteria include:

- 1) A formally organized association with a mission statement, by laws, and a constitution.
- 2) A slate of verifiable officers including, but not limited to, President, VP, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- 3) A bank account.
- 4) Details of how often meetings are held, where, and how.
- 5) Copies of the minutes from the most recent two meetings.
- 6) A formal request letter addressed to the university detailing the above and requesting a Charter as a recognized Alumni Association.

## Alumni communications program

### Overview

Maintaining regular contact with alumni is a must for any fraternity chapter. Alumni provide regular financial support, institutional memory, and mentoring of the undergraduates.

Finding lost brothers is critical. Most of our chapters have a significant (more than 10 percent) number of brothers whose current mailing and email addresses are unknown, so that these brothers are lost to your efforts to communicate with them. The first step in implementing an effective alumni communications program is to begin the process of finding these lost brothers. You can do this by contacting various stakeholders to update our database for you.

An effective chapter alumni communications program should:

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1. Be regular and consistent.
2. Generate more gifts than it costs to produce. This gift over cost ratio should be calculated on an annual basis, not on a piece by piece basis.

3. Have paper and electronic components.
4. Be managed and overseen by both a responsible undergraduate and alumni officer.

The best practices for an *annual program* – a regular communications program that cycles yearly and that usually corresponds with the school year – typically comprises the following elements.

- **First Solicitation Letter.** This is usually a one-page, simple solicitation asking brothers to make a gift to the annual program. The term gift is used instead of dues because participation is voluntary and is not required to be a member in good standing. An honor roll of the previous year's donors is included in the mailing, along with recognition.
- **Fall Newsletter.** In addition to having articles by the undergraduates, there should be ample alumni content, including an update from the alumni board and news about alumni members at large. This newsletter may promote or report on Homecoming (as long as Homecoming is in the fall, as it is on most campuses).
- **Spring Newsletter.** This is similar in content and purpose to the fall newsletter, except that this issue usually promotes annual campus reunions.
- **Personalized Lapsed Donor Mailing.** This is a personalized letter to donors who have given sometime in the past but who have yet given during the current year. This is typically sent about three-quarters of the way through the giving year, targeting donors from the previous five years.
- **Thank You Program.** Thanking your donors isn't only the right thing to do, it is also a critically important part of the process of nurturing donors who give every year.
- **eDistributions (e-mail blasts).** E-mail is an attractive way to communicate inexpensively with alumni members. If done incorrectly, though, you can alienate members, gut your annual giving program, and end up on spam blacklists. It is prudent to observe the following general rules of thumb.
  - Use eDistributions as a way to promote individual events or deliver topical news on a specific subject. Don't inundate your members with e-mail.
  - Don't use eDistributions as a replacement for paper solicitations, at least not yet. As stated above, electronic solicitation results in the fraternity world do not yet match the results of paper mailings. You need to be careful to not throttle your gift income flow.

## Alumni newsletters

A good chapter newsletter is one of the best ways to solidify alumni support for your chapter. It can have great short term, immediate, as well as long term, impact. Unfortunately, the opposite holds true for a poor newsletter.

### *Why Newsletters Are Important*

A newsletter is the most efficient way to communicate with a sizable, dispersed group of alumni and to promote your undergraduates point of view. Secondly, a good newsletter can be a factor in chapter morale, membership recruitment, and scholarship. Obviously it has usefulness as a historical record of events of significance within your chapter.



## *Tips*

1. Select an English or Journalism major to be your newsletter editor
2. Publish a Fall and Spring issue on a regular basis
3. Include good photographs of undergrads doing intelligent things
4. Include articles written by both undergrads and alumni
5. Include names and phone numbers of undergraduate and alumni officers
6. Include invitation and instructions on how to submit newsletter articles & donations
7. Should be part of a regular, integrated communications program
8. Reserve enough copies to distribute to next year's pledge class, so they will feel more a part of the chapter.
9. There is no substitute for reporting the activities of an already successful chapter. These articles will write themselves.
10. Noting the exception above, there is no substitute for good writing. If absolutely necessary, use an outsider to do *re-writes*, but *not* to write the original material.
11. Good layout (the way an article is typeset and then arranged on a page) can make even poor writing seem good. Look through national magazines like TIME or NEWSWEEK, and notice how they fit articles on a page, what style of type they use, how they place photos. Even ads in those periodicals can provide useful ideas for the layout.
12. Good photographs can overcome poor layout and writing. Remember that no one cares what kind of shoes a person is wearing. Move close to the subject so details can be seen. Again, look at the difference in a group shot in TIME, and that of a snapshot taken of a group of undergraduates. The professional shot is always closer to the subject. Look for the unique angle or unique activity.
13. Write from the prospective of what interests alumni: new associates/members/officers, reunion information, campus developments, chapter athletics and scholarship. A feature article on an alumnus in each issue often helps spark interest.
14. Learn from each issue how to make the next one better.
15. Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!

## *The Chapter Newsletter Award*

The Newsletter Award is presented annually to the Chapter with the most outstanding newsletter sent to Alumni to generate Alumni involvement. Each year at the annual Convention, an award will be presented to the most outstanding newsletter sent out during the preceding year.

While newsletters will vary in style and appearance, certain areas of quality can be judged in competition:

- A. Content and Balance: There should be a reasonable balance between undergraduate and alumni news. The alumnus reading the newsletter looks for the answers to these questions: "What are the undergraduates doing?"; "What are the alumni doing?"; "What is the condition of the Chapter House?"; "What is the state of the Chapter?"; "What are my contemporaries doing?"; "How can I provide support?" If an alumnus finds answers to these questions, the newsletter has served its purpose.
- B. Writing and Editing: Any publication must be well written. Styles vary from writer to writer but "readability" is essential to any effective publication.

- C. Makeup, Layout, and General Appearance: Does the printed material look well prepared? Is it aesthetically pleasing? Is it printed on good quality paper? Is the printing good?
- D. Overall Quality and Impression: Is it something alumni can be proud of? Does it generate alumni response? Does it project a well-written, attractive appearance?

## Chapter websites and alumni relations

The website is a critical tool for keeping alumni informed and connected. A good site should have fresh content, plenty of alumni news, a secure online member directory, and a photo archive. Secure online giving functionality is also important so that the member group as a whole begins to get more comfortable with the practice of donating to the chapter electronically. The website should include: Discussion Forums, Membership Directory and Address Update Services, Document Repositories, and many more.

## Fundraising

### Fundraising strategy

A key to the success of any fraternity or alumni organization is its ability to raise funds when needed. Even if no financial need exists, we recommend that a full-scale annual loyalty drive be conducted each year so that the contact with the alumni is maintained and the habit of contributing is sustained. If the funds are not needed for the Chapter House, they can be used for scholarship and literary programs, such as lectures, concerts, publications, etcetera. These events will attract favorable publicity for the fraternity system in general, and the chapter in particular. In some cases, the chapter and the alumni organization can build up a small endowment as protection against lean years.

The traditional reasons given for a poor fund drive are twofold: (1) that the chapter has no tradition of annual contributions; or (2) that its alumni are poor. In general, these are usually excuses for a poorly organized fund drive (although there are certain exceptions). In any case, almost any alumnus can afford to give \$25 to \$30 per year to support his chapter, and few chapters need more than this amount per year to prosper.

Perhaps the most important point about a fund-raising campaign is credibility. The reasons for needing the money must be believable; the amount needed must be reasonable; and the management and use of the funds must be clearly reported. A successful fund-raising program must have initial energy and long-term credibility. It cannot cry "wolf" every few years and expect to receive support. Build for the long term.

Credibility is vital in three important areas: people, program and procedures. The person controlling funds, particularly the treasurer, must be of unquestionable integrity. There must be a clearly defined program – either a short-term annual goal (clearly related to a budget or project), or a longer-term project (house renovation). Finally, the procedures – correct addresses, acknowledging contributions,

regular (and intelligible) financial statements, fiscal controls, etc. – must give the contributor confidence in the ability of the organization. No one likes to give money to a group that spells his name wrong.

The board will require three to five years to establish an effective Annual Loyalty Drive. Then, it should require only routine maintenance to continue producing funds thereafter.

There is a major question of fund-raising strategy: is it best to solicit fixed (and relatively low) annual dues, or to ask for general contributions? In reviewing the results reported by chapters in recent years, it would appear that if your chapter does not really need funds, it would be best to take the dues approach in order to maintain some annual cash flow and keep the alumni in the habit of contributing. On the other hand, if your chapter genuinely needs funds, then it would be best to ask for general contributions.

Finally, and most important, the success of your fund-raising will depend on your overall alumni relations program. This program will consist of many various elements, such as mailings, events, phone calls, etcetera. Some of these activities will be conducted by different committees of your Board of Trustees and others will be handled by the undergraduates. All aspects of the program, however, must be coordinated or “orchestrated.” Otherwise, one aspect of the program might undermine another.

The fund-raising tactics outlined in the next section must be used with care. First, you must select those tactics that will work most effectively with your particular group. Second, you must select those tactics that suit your board and its personnel best. For example, some people write good letters. Others will work best on the phone in personal contact. Third, all the tactics must be combined into a year-long program that is coordinated by one central hand.

## **Fundraising tactics**

### **Mailings to the alumni for fund solicitation**

We recommend that alumni receive two or three mailings a year that are direct or indirect appeals for funds. We suggest mixing the hard-sell and soft-sell appeals, depending upon the urgency of the chapter’s needs, be recall that no one wants to read three hard-sells a year. Several of the letters should focus on the news of the chapter and the campus with a pitch at the end for funds. We recommend that an addressed return envelope be included with each mailing.

The mailings should be timed to coincide with the rhythm of the academic year of your university and with your fiscal year. In general, May-June (reunion time), September (return to school), and year-end are good times.

### **Annual report**

As soon as you have a year of giving showing a marked improvement over the previous year, you should publish an Annual Report listing all of the contributors and containing financial statements for the alumni organization. This report should also contain useful fund-raising devices such as named giving

levels. Examine other ideas such as competitions between decades and delegations to see if they might be useful for your group. The Annual Report is usually prepared by the Finance Committee.

### Alumni activities

Each chapter must determine when and how it can best entertain its alumni. Many chapters hold two major social functions each year in conjunction with Homecoming and Reunion events. Homecoming events may feature an open bar and dinner for the chapter members and dates, alumni and family after the traditional football game. The Reunion event may feature a similar cocktail party and dinner held with brothers (and their dates) from reunion classes in attendance. It is also a common practice to hold board meetings on the same weekends as these alumni activities.

### Class agent organization

Once the fund-raising program has begun, we recommend recruiting an agent for each class or two classes (depending on size). We recommend that an agent have no more than 10-12 persons to contact, or the job becomes too burdensome. A member of the board (perhaps the Fund Drive Chairman) is appointed as the director of the class agent organization. He recruits the class agents and maintains their motivation and their efficiency. Each class agent must be fully informed about the chapter, and background information should be provided.

Once recruited, the class agents receive information on each member of his group that includes contact information and previous giving history. The class agent also receives a yearly schedule of the alumni cultivation program, periodic reports on the contributors to date from his group, and a final “thank you” for his service. Terms of the class agents are usually limited to three years in order to prevent burn out and inject new ideas into the program.

### Other programs

Other activities in an alumni relations program can include a Reunion Class Letter (notes on the members of the classes participating in reunions that year); special reunion gifts (either cash gifts or special capital improvement projects for the house which can be dedicated to that class by a plaque); summer job programs; literary programs or publications; initiation sponsorship (an alumnus pays the initiation fee of an undergraduate who cannot afford it).

### Conclusion

The board must select the most workable of these options and orchestrate them into an effective program that works in conjunction with the Communication Program discussed in the last chapter of this recommendation. The following is an example program that your board may wish to model:

March	First mailing: <u>Annual Report</u> listing the results of previous year and the opening letter for the present year’s fund drive.
May	Second Mailing: Invitation from Chapter to Reunion cocktail party, dinner, and annual meeting; Chapter Newsletter, Chapter Literary

	Magazine, and follow-up note for fund drive.  Initial class agent contact (mailed under separate cover).
June	Reunion activities at Chapter House: cocktails, dinner, and annual meeting.
September	Third Mailing: Annual Loyalty Drive; second class agent contact for non-contributors to that point in the Drive.
October	Forth Mailing: Chapter invitation to Homecoming Weekend.
November	Homecoming Weekend: Cocktails and dinner at Chapter.
December	Fifth Mailing: Final Annual Loyalty Drive appeal.

## Managing the relationship with the chapter

### Alumni as part of team

In working with the actives, the Alumni Board will be put in a position of explaining the benefits of a functioning alumni relations program. A few objectives that you may mention are:

- To assist in rush by making recommendations of potential rushees as well as contacting potential pledges' parents to explain the benefits of fraternity affiliation.
- To solicit interest of alumni who may wish to serve on the house corporation or as an assistant advisor.
- To provide chapter continuity by maintaining communication after leaving school.
- To develop possible employment opportunities or benefits from job counseling.
- To gain financial support for the establishment of scholarships and loans within the chapter.
- To add inspiration and credibility to the pledge education process through the establishment of a guest speaker program.

### The role of advisor

It may be cliché to say that virtually every good chapter has a good alumni board behind it and that those chapters with major problems often have ineffective alumni boards, or no alumni boards at all, but both are true.

That being said, the Alumni Association cannot run the chapter. Your effectiveness will be your ability to lead by advising which means there must be a degree of respect for the Association by the membership. Ideas and direction are provided by the Association. Expect that ideas and suggestions will not always be followed. That is part of the learning experience for our undergraduate members. There can be occasions, however, where some course of action must be followed. In those situations your judgment on the approach needed will be required.

In view of this, it is clear the Board's success is directly dependent upon its ability to sense the changing needs of the chapter, both promptly and accurately. To accomplish this, regular communication must take place with the undergraduate chapter.

### **Establishing continuity**

There are a number of reasons for establishing continuity. First, and perhaps foremost, is the problem of turnover in the membership. Each year a substantial portion of the group leaves and is replaced. Consequently, there is a continuing flow of new faces through the elective offices of the chapter and the problem of training for positions of responsibility is ordinarily severe.

A second factor is tradition. Tradition is meaningful only if there is accurate recall of how something has been done in the past. In the rapidly changing membership of a fraternity, this accuracy is difficult to achieve.

Because of the relatively short span of memory of the active membership at any given time, tradition comes to be thought of mostly in terms of how we did it last year. The assumption is, of course, that how we did it last year is the same as the way it was done the year before and the year before that. Yet this is often untrue. Very little in the way of detail concerning operating procedures is committed to writing. This lack of documentation, coupled with the yearly turnover in all offices of the chapter, tends to encourage vague and inaccurate recall of how things have been done before.

A good pledge program should prepare the men in the regard of establishing continuity.

### **Goals**

Annual goals should outline what the chapter wants and needs most from the Advisory Team as well as what measure of merit each agrees will best determine success.

People tend to know their capabilities better than anyone else. If the chapter sets its own goals, the members will have a higher commitment to goal accomplishment.

Remember to encourage the chapter to set realistic goals. Setting unrealistic goals will only increase the members' frustration and decrease their productivity. So goals should be realistic and measurable.

Finally, the goals should be written. Unless a goal can be placed on paper for all to see, we can be sure it has not been discussed enough and that there is not enough agreement as to its meaning.

The process of establishing specific and realistic goals is not always easy. In fact, it takes time and work. Once the first set of goals is in hand, however, it becomes much easier in subsequent years; the process of establishing goals becomes a process of evaluating progress on a previous set.

A regular discussion between the chapter and the alumni board should be maintained.

### **Responsibility**

Another motivating factor that contributes to the learning environment is the members' awareness of how they relate to the chapter and the academic institution. By taking a few minutes to explain how they fit into the success of the chapter, you will increase their productivity tremendously.

Young men are all different, and they must all learn to be tolerant and understanding of each others' differences. To increase individual motivation, they must treat individuals as equals. Human beings have a need to be recognized for their accomplishments. They need to feel important no matter how modest their achievement. Do not hesitate to help when asked, and never give negative feedback without providing suggestions for improvement.

In conversations with members, the advisor is constantly presented with opportunities to turn their thinking into new channels and to challenge them to think constructively about the problems that confront them. As with other kinds of teaching, there is no substitute for practice.

### **Positive counseling feedback**

One final guidepost of great importance is the need for the alumni advisor to approach his work consistently from the positive side. The mission is to help and not criticize; it is seldom that a negative approach of any kind accomplishes much that is worthwhile. But, when he begins to criticize or to take sides or to press for sudden drastic changes, the relationship with the members is immediately weakened and effectiveness decreased. Here, also, there are certain necessary exceptions. But for the long haul, only a positive approach will bring constructive results.

Perhaps the most important data we can give and receive is feedback related to behavior. Focusing on behavior implies that it is something related to a specific situation that might be changed. It is less threatening to a person to hear comments about his behavior than his traits.

- \* Focus feedback on description rather than judgment.
- \* Focus feedback on the sharing of ideas and information rather than on giving advice.
- \* Focus feedback on exploration of alternatives which may be of value to the recipient.
- \* Focus feedback at the appropriate time.

### **Chapter by laws**

Of all the leadership tools available to the chapter and adviser, the one most immediately useful is the establishment and maintenance of self-government, i.e., chapter bylaws.

## Why bylaws are important

Chapter bylaws are basic ground rules, written by those directly concerned of what is deemed fair treatment, procedure, and the expectations of their peers. Over time, if implemented impartially without favoritism, the bylaws will lead to good internal leadership and control.

## Tips

Don't have rules for the sake of rules. Be sure they are serving a purpose and are useful.

1. It takes thought and planning. Form a committee that considers all the important factors and factions within your chapter.
2. Start with a broad, rough outline of what the bylaws should address. For example: Procedure, how will this document be ratified, accepted, or changed in the future; Membership, what are the minimum standards, requirements, and expectations the chapter should hold for itself; Officers, same as above, what minimum grades, etc., should be expected for a member to hold office; you might consider a section just on Finances.
3. Debate, include or reject, controversial sections after the easy ones are agreed to.
4. If a section is rejected, wait a while, then see if the objections to it can be overcome.
5. Never, ever break a bylaw to favor a popular member or pledge.
6. Distribute copies to all brothers and especially to each Associate. Test the Associates on it before they are initiated so they can't say: "I don't know."
7. Make it "a process" to change your bylaws, so the chapter isn't run by a whim. Each spring is a good time to establish a committee and update the bylaws.

## Judicial process

### Overview

A strong judicial process is imperative in all chapters. There must exist a well structured process, with outlined standards for brother's behavior and expectations for that behavior through some type of membership contract. These standards can be documented in the chapter's bylaws.

The judicial board should be comprised of five members of the chapter. The chairman of the judicial board should be the warden of the chapter. The remaining four members of the board should be selected from the undergraduate members of the chapter. Criteria for the selection of the remaining committee members should be devised and distributed prior to selection. Areas of consideration should be GPA, past behavioral performances, involvement, fairness and rectitude.

The board chairman should convene the board when it is deemed necessary by request of a chapter member or board member. The board should review a request for a hearing and report their decision at chapter meeting.

## Risk management

Risk Management does not only focus on alcohol and drug use within the chapters. Other areas of focus are hazing, abusive behavior, and property management. The only way to work in harmony with the community is to practice good risk management.



It is the vice president's duty to ensure that the Fraternity's *Risk Management Policies* are enforced at the chapter. The vice president already has the responsibility of being in charge of all the chapter officers. This gives him the opportunity to establish a committee that can create an action plan that will assist the chapter in pursuing safe fun.

One important fact to remember is that everyone associated with the chapter is insured. If all local, state laws are followed, there is no need to concern yourself with a lawsuit. Once a law or policy is broken by one of these individuals, they automatically pull themselves out of this circle.

### **Hazing**

No chapter, affiliate, student or alumnus shall conduct nor condone hazing activities.

### **Sexual abuse and harassment**

The fraternity will not tolerate or condone any form of sexually abusive behavior on the part of its members, whether physical, mental or emotional.

### **Education**

Each fraternity shall annually instruct its students and alumni in the Risk Management Policy. Additionally, all student and alumni members shall annually receive a copy of said Risk Management Policy.

### **Abusing behavior**

The Fraternity will not tolerate or condone any form of abusive behavior on the part of its members or associates, whether physical, mental or emotional. This is to include any actions directed toward members or nonmembers.

### **High risk events**

University chapters cannot afford the exposure of sponsoring, organizing, endorsing or participating in events or activities which involve a high-risk of physical injury or damage to property. While no definitive list of such events can be given, chapter must take a common sense approach to evaluating the risk of a particular event or activity.

### **Property management**

The chapter facility should provide for each member an environment for study, clean and safe living conditions, and recreational facilities. A sound program focused on proper maintenance of the property, along with due regard for university/college, health, or fire department regulations, where applicable, shall be followed in each chapter.

### **Transportation**

University chapters are encouraged to establish a transportation policy for chapter events which are not held at or within walking distance from the chapter facility. It is strongly recommended that the policy include the use of a form of mass transportation.

### **Crisis Situations**

Examples of crisis situations include but are not limited to:

- Death or serious injury of a member or guest.
- Fire in the chapter house.
- Any injury or incident involving alcohol or social events.

Included in the following pages is a copy of the Chapter Crisis Management Plan that is distributed to each chapter. This provides the action plan recommended when a crisis situation arises that affects the chapter and/or the brothers and associates. The Plan provides space to maintain contact numbers in case of an emergency.

#### GENERAL EDUCATION

1. The entire pledge class should review Crisis Management Procedures and be familiar with the important concepts of handling a crisis. Every officer should have a copy of the Crisis Management Plan as well.
2. Be certain that all members of the chapter know that the president is in charge of every emergency situation. The president should consult with other members who possess more expertise or insight. The final decision, however, rests with the president.
3. In the event that the president is absent, the next ranking officer assumes control. Chapters should define officer rankings and include them in the chapter bylaws and Crisis Management Plan. If the ranking is not in place, the following can be utilized: president, vice president, risk manager, and treasurer.
4. All members must know who is in charge and be prepared to follow instructions. Include a review of the chapter's crisis procedures in the chapter's risk management education program each term.

#### Crisis Management

1. In nearly all situations, the President's first call will be a 101, 102, 103 emergency number. Briefly and calmly explain the situation so that the appropriate emergency personnel can respond. Cooperate fully with the needs of any public safety organization seeking to help you or protect your safety.
2. If a crisis occurs, close the chapter house at once. Permit only chapter members, alumni and appropriate officials to enter. Assign a few responsible members to control access to the chapter house.
3. The president will then notify:  
Alumni Board Chair  
  
Legal counsel
4. Assemble the members for a chapter meeting. Explain that there is an emergency and that the chapter house is closed. Remind members that only the president can speak for the Fraternity – Members are not to speak to anyone (including friends, girlfriends, parents, the university) about the crisis. Do not discuss details, speculate on events or otherwise project consequences until police,

your chapter advisor and university officials have arrived. It is important that the chapter members remain calm.

5. File an incident/loss report with the related Office within 24 hours.
6. If the news media should contact the chapter, only the designated spokesperson, the president or the alumni board chair should speak for the chapter. With the help and approval of chapter legal counsel and the alumni board chair, the chapter should carefully prepare a formal statement to be issued to the media. Do not release any names until an investigation has been completed and the timing is appropriate.

## **Relationship with other organizations**

### **The relationship with the campus administration**

Establish a relationship with the school administration officials that play a role in your chapter's day to day operations. A regular meeting, perhaps once per month, with this individual will help keep the communication link open between the administration office and the chapter. What is the university's perception of the chapter? What is the chapter doing well? Assess the chapter's performance from both points of view and figure out an action plan to work on between meetings. From these discussions, a relationship will blossom and the chapter will be the recipient of the benefits.

### **The relationship with the community**

Do the brothers realize that the neighbors often dislike the activities associated with a chapter house? What can the brothers do to improve their image in the neighborhood?

A good approach is to advocate participation in as many community service events as possible and advertise the fact that the brothers are working with the community rather than against the neighbors. There are a number of community service projects that can be organized within the neighborhood such as: snow shoveling, spring clean-up etc. These examples may not be suitable in all settings, but generally any effort at all is a big step to winning over the neighbors.

As for social events, the chapter should be aware of its surroundings at all times. The chapter alumni board can help raise this awareness. Again, prior notice of the upcoming event will only help the situation. The neighbors will now know when the event is being held and can make arrangements to perhaps go out for the evening.

## **Officer and chapter retreats**

### **Goal setting and retreats**

As most everyone is aware, establishing goals and objectives is a logical step in determining outcomes and successes. The same theory holds true for fraternity chapters. If a chapter has some idea of where it wishes to end up, then it is easier to ascertain how to get there.

Every year, each chapter should attempt to make a complete evaluation of the chapter to determine the strong and weak areas of operation. Then, specific short and long-range goals should be established to

maintain strong areas and improve weak areas. Definite plans should be drawn up to meet the overall goal.

This process is the essence of Management By Objectives (MBO). Many highly successful chapters utilize MBO when organizing their priorities each year.

One forum which has proven successful in chapter goal setting is retreats. Retreats offer the opportunity for officers and members to get away from the day-to-day disturbances of the house or similar environment. A remote location away from campus is most suitable, but not always a requirement for a successful retreat.

It is often good for representatives from the Alumni Board to accompany the brothers and participate in the retreat. As an alumnus, you have some valuable advice to offer. The retreat may serve to allow you to “loosen your tie” and get to know members better in an informal setting. With both the chapter members and the chapter alumni board working together, a truer sense of the purpose of an alumni board can be realized and can lead to a more effective relationship with the current undergraduates.

### Goal setting management by objective

Though a number of positive results can come from a retreat, one primary aim is the creation of a set of specific goals and objectives to direct the organization. Through the development of a **Management by Objectives** (MBO) Program a chapter can greatly enhance its efforts to achieve its goals. A Management by Objective Program is a tool created for the purpose of:

- Outlining officer job descriptions;
- Identifying clear goals for the chapter;
- Creating specific objectives for the officers to perform;
- Establishing dates and deadlines for the completion of goals and objectives.

Perhaps the most dynamic feature of the MBO process is that it **permits the chapter the opportunity to chart the progress** of the organization while also monitoring the performance of the individual officers.

It is best to prepare the written Management by Objectives Program soon after an officer or chapter retreat has been conducted. The final product should then be distributed to each member and associate within the chapter (provided below is an excellent, though abbreviated, sample MBO Program). Bear in mind, **the program will only be effective if reviewed and monitored on a regular basis.**

#### Sample Management by Objectives Program

- I. **Purpose** – To provide a written guideline by which the leaders of the chapter can effectively direct the strategies of the organization for the successful operation of the chapter.
  - A. **Procedure** – Outline officer job descriptions
  - B. Identify chapter goals.
  - C. Create officer objectives.
- II. Establish dates & deadlines for the completion of goals, objectives.
- III. **Officer Job Description**
  - A. President

1. Preside at all weekly meetings of the chapter.
  2. Serve as the official spokesman for the chapter.
  3. Create and administer committees within the chapter.
  4. Enforce the laws of the Fraternity.
- B. Vice President
1. Serve as the presiding officer at chapter meeting in the absence of president.
  2. Serve as the chairman of the weekly executive committee.
  3. Oversee the operation of all officers, standing and special committees. Require officers and committee chairmen to submit status reports on a weekly basis.
  4. Coordinate the development of detailed officer files.
- C. Treasurer -
1. Maintain accurate and detailed financial records of the chapter.
  2. Submit all required budget reports to the chapter alumni association in a prompt and professional manner.
  3. Develop a chapter budget prior to the commencement of the academic year.
  4. Collect all monies owed to the chapter by midterm.

## **Membership recruitment**

If the chapter doesn't recruit new members, then the chapter's existence can be somewhat short-lived. New members provide continuity. They serve as additional hands to do the work and hold the offices. They provide fresh ideas and differing opinions. They add diversity to the chapter as they represent different backgrounds and lifestyles.

A chapter alumni board chairman should always be prepared to encourage the chapter to prepare for and participate in recruitment. Listed below are some hints for you:

1. Encourage that the most qualified members serve as the Recruitment Chairman and Recruitment Committee members. They should be motivated, assertive and organized.
2. Be certain the chapter members know the importance of recruitment and that they know how to recruit. Emphasize pre-recruitment workshops, discussions about the values of Alpha Delta Phi membership, and practice sessions in introductions/conversation as well as making rushees feel at home with Alpha Deltas.
3. Encourage the recruitment committee to communicate to the brothers the objectives and goals of membership selection. Stress full chapter participation.
4. Accentuate the fact that recruitment is a year-round activity and should not be viewed as a week or two period of time at the beginning of the term.
5. Encourage the members to thoroughly examine each individual who demonstrate the true qualities necessary to be a member of chapter.

## **The importance of training a successor**

First and foremost, this recommendation should be reviewed with the new chapter alumni board chairman. This will provide him with the basic essentials to begin working with his chapter. If material has been added during your tenure as chapter alumni board chairman, be sure to clearly explain this material as well.

There are many areas that are going to be unique to your situation and this recommendation will not be able to cover those issues. Everyone knows, a good education comes through experience. Sharing your own personal experiences as well as offering your guidance, will be two excellent assets for the new chapter alumni board chairman.

Basic expectations need to be shared as well. Executive committee meetings, and chapter retreats, are a few areas where clear expectations are required.