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B U L L E T I N

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The Official Newsletter of Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity

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Moving Forward with Accreditation

The year 2000 will surely be a year remembered for several significant events. For instance, Americans will vote (have you registered?) for the next president of the United States, the Summer Olympics will be held "Down Under" in Sydney, Australia and Alpha Sigma Phi will be remembered for the introduction and implementation of the accreditation program. HA!! The accreditation program pales in comparison to the events listed above; however, this program is critical for Alpha Sigma Phi to grow and prosper.

In recent years Alpha Sigma Phi has made strides in becoming a pro-active organization as opposed to a reactive organization. For example, a greater emphasis has been placed on attending the National Leadership Conference and Conventions; more scholarship opportunities have been made available; the Academy of Leadership for our Presidents; and more recently the Ralph F. Burns Leadership Institute (formerly the Ralph F. Burns New Member's Program) and the Standards of Excellence chapter evaluation tool.

The Accreditation Program falls in line with the Standards of Excellence chapter evaluation tool. The purpose of the Standards of Excellence was to remove the subjectivity and replace it with objectivity. The Standards of Excellence clearly re-enforces a chapter's strengths while identifying a chapter's challenged areas. This program was implemented in the fall of 1998.

Understanding that our chapters are now familiar with standards, the Accreditation Program is the next step in this metamorphosis. The Standards of Excellence and Accreditation will work hand in hand. Utilization of the Standards of Excellence concisely communicates to our constituents (our chapters) where improvement must occur. This then allows the consultant to strategically assist chapters during visitations. Thus, the allocation of Headquarters resources is executed in a more effective manner. Therefore, your undergraduate dollar and our alumni dollar is spent wisely.

The critical element of the Accreditation Program is that every year one-third of our chapters will be evaluated. Consequently, every 3 years each and every chapter will receive a bow to stern, starboard to port review. Chapters that meet standards and chapters that are improving will be rewarded and those struggling with no signs of growth or improvement will be placed on a limited probationary status. Headquarters will provide resources including time, talent and resource materials to assist, but ultimately the change is the responsibility of the chapter. The finality of the situation is this; if a chapter that struggles incessantly and continually falls short of the agreed standards, without improvement, the Accreditation provides a proactive incentive for chapters to either improve or be closed.

What we are doing here at Alpha Sigma Phi is nothing earth shattering or mind boggling! Heck, a plethora of universities and National Fraternities and Sororities across the country have already implemented their own Accreditation programs. It is time that Alpha Sigma Phi proves once again why we are America's premier Fraternity.



Why Paperwork is Important

After discussions at the Academy of Leadership and the Ralph F. Burns programs this past January 21-23 it may be in order to explain the purpose and necessity of completing forms requested by Headquarters. The greatest shortcoming identified is the processing of pledges, the paperwork needed there and then becoming brothers and the paperwork required there. Therefore, listed below are the basics of reporting:

Phase 1 - Pledging

1. Blue Pledge Report Form: The form is completed at the first pledge class meeting.
2. Biographical Data Forms: These should be handed out and completed at the 1st pledge class meeting.
3. \$72.00 Pledge Fee: This should be collected or temporarily subsidized by the chapter within the first week of pledging. This fee once sent to Headquarters is non-refundable.

The Blue Pledge Report Form, Biographical Data Form and the Pledge Fee should all be sent together in one simple packet to Headquarters within 10 days of formal pledging.

Phase 2 - Initiation

1. Initiation Authorization Form: This form is to be sent in prior to initiation. This form is important for the following reasons: 1) Full name of the pledge; 2) Proper spelling of the pledges name; 3) Roster number, needed for the membership card and brother badge. *All of this information is needed, if any information is missing the entire process stops until Headquarters is able to ascertain the needed and correct information.*
2. Initiation Fee: \$184.00. This fee must be paid in order to receive a membership card, badge, and shingle. This fee is refundable. Remember it takes 4 to 6 weeks to receive a badge after it has been ordered keep that in mind.

The Initiation Authorization Form and the Initiation fee should all be sent together in one simple packet to Headquarters well in advance of initiation.

Phase 3 – Lifetime Membership Fee

Lifetime Membership Fee: \$179.00 – Freshmen/Sophomore Status \$ 102.00 – Junior/Senior Status

This fee is charged 6 months after initiation. Two years ago at the 1998 National Convention in Norfolk, Virginia it was decided by a vote of the undergraduate membership that Alpha Sigma Phi change and adopt the fees and dues structure we have today. For simplicity sake, there is one invoice issued at the time of pledging outlining pledge, initiation, and lifetime membership fees. Headquarters no longer has their long arms into the pockets of our undergraduates at every turn; however, if financial issues are not reconciled, a chapter will be dealt with in a stern and persistent manner. It is imperative that chapters hold their membership accountable for the individual fees and dues. For, the harsh reality is this, if the individual brothers are delinquent and fail to uphold their financial obligation their irresponsibility (debt) becomes the chapter's responsibility (paying off that debt).

If at anytime there are questions, concerns please call Melanie Keating at Headquarters. It is consensus that prevention is the best medicine.

The Ralph F. Burns Leadership Institute

Twenty-one Chapters arrived in Indianapolis, IN, on Friday, January 21, 2000, for the Ralph F. Burns New Member Program. Heading into its third year, the program was aimed this year at newly initiated Brothers, a change from the previous years. The program kicked off with a video history of Ralph F. Burns and a speech by Grand Senior President Stuart Spisak. The tone was set for the entire weekend.

Throughout the 48-hour conference, Brothers alternated between large group general sessions and smaller society groups. The large group meetings were headed by lead-facilitator Mary Peterson, the Associate Director of Student Life at the University of Iowa and who has been a part of the program since its inception in 1998. Topics such as values and ethics, collaborative leadership, and leadership styles were covered.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

One special large group session was led by former Executive Director, Rob Sheehan, who spoke to initiated Brothers about Ritual. Every Brother was given access to a Ritual book during the session, and many said that it was the best part of the entire conference.

In the society meetings, Brothers were given the chance to discuss the large group topics in greater depth. Many of the new initiates discovered for the first time just how diverse our Brotherhood is, and were challenged as they listened to opinions different than their own. Yet, as usual, the society meetings were where the men experienced the most Brotherhood, and were able to exchange ideas between Chapters.

On Saturday night, the program joined with the Academy of Leadership for a Brotherhood Banquet. At the banquet, Brothers listened to CEO & President of the Educational Foundation, Kevin Garvey. He gave a speech on the State of the Foundation. Followed by Grand Senior President Stuart Spisak who spoke about the state of the Fraternity, highlighting many of the achievements the Fraternity has made over the past year.

The Conference concluded on Sunday at noon, after a packed weekend. Though the weekend was tiring for all involved, it was a definite success. Goals were set and motivation to succeed was fostered. The Chapters that participated are primed for success.

Next year, the program will impact nearly fifty groups. While changes may be made to the timing, the core of the program will be the same. The program will allow newly initiated Brothers the chance to attend a national event, trade ideas with other Chapters, gain valuable leadership skills for their Chapter, and set goals for themselves and their Chapter. Space will be limited, so plan now to attend!

Chapter Discipline

The topic of Chapter discipline is never an easy topic to handle, but it is a reality in the fraternal world. The groups below are not listed for the purposes of being hung in a symbolic form of effigy, but rather to educate our existing groups on the importance of maintaining high standards. It is every Alpha Sigs responsibility to inculcate the values and ideals of our most important documents, such as our Code of Conduct, our Reasons for Being, our Pledge Creed, and most of all our ritual.

Coastal Carolina University, Delta Sigma: The Delta Sigma chapter was closed in the fall of 1999. The chapter was closed for a multiplicity of reasons including, financial and recruitment. It had been an uphill battle for the chapter after experiencing years of financial strains, hazing problems and other risk management dilemmas.

William Paterson University, Delta Mu: The Delta Mu chapter was closed in the fall of 1999 primarily due to unrelenting financial issues and recruitment problems.

Indiana University, Gamma Chi: The Gamma Chi chapter was suspended in the fall of 1999 as a result of several risk management incidents. The chapter membership totaled in excess of 110 members and after a membership review, 70 members left voluntarily or were asked to leave. There are currently 40 members attempting to revive the chapter.

Widener University, Gamma Xi: The Gamma Xi chapter was closed in January of 2000. The chapter had been financially mismanaged for a number of years and in recent years experienced a number of risk management infractions.

Shawnee State University Colony: After being affiliated with Alpha Sigma Phi for 4 years the colony has been dissolved. The group after valiant efforts was not able to meet the standards by which it takes to become a chartered group of Alpha Sigma Phi.



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IMPORTANT DUE DATES TO REMEMBER

February 2000

1 Chapter Leadership Consultant Applications

March 2000

15 Delegate Fees for National Convention

15 The Tomahawk report

April 2000

1 April Report of Membership

1 UIFI & LeaderShape Scholarship Applications

14 Grand Chapter (National Leadership Conference & Convention)
Undergraduate Conference Coordinator Applications

May 2000

1 Grand Chapter Scholarship Applications

June 2000

1 All Award and Educational Scholarship
Applications

15 Non-Delegate Registration Form



Academy of Leadership

The 2000 Academy of Leadership was a huge success. This year a record number of participants attended the Academy and left Indianapolis with valuable skills that will help them help their chapter. Rob Sheehan and Tom Champoux were the keynote facilitators as they led the chapter Presidents in the general sessions by covering a wide variety of topics. Paul Brand, a representative with the new interest group at Hartford, commented, "I can honestly say that . . . there was very little of this experience that I did not like." That sentiment was echoed by many of the participants at the Conference. Chapter Presidents left Indianapolis on Sunday tired but with the knowledge that their chapter would be stronger and poised to be the premier fraternity on their campus. Mike Prestas, HSP of the Delta Nu chapter, summed up that sentiment when he said, "I know in my heart that because of this conference, I will be a better leader of my chapter and make my chapter flourish."