



OUR CHAPTER QUEST
learning to live with others

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CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

Chapter government is a democratic process bringing men of often varied background together as equals. Our voluntary association, striving for equality and brotherhood, is the process by which membership teaches about life in a democratic society. The essence of that process is its free elections, which permit qualified and motivated individuals to assume positions of leadership and responsibility with group consent. The successful operation of a chapter of Theta Xi is too complex to be left to chance, guesswork or memory. Additionally, the constant turnover of members in each chapter requires stable lines of communication. Seven officers are elected to serve as leaders in the major areas of chapter operations. Other activities are handled by committee chairmen who report to the officers.

A strong chapter chooses its leaders with a great deal of care. Younger members are encouraged to develop their abilities by serving as committee members and chairmen. With proper background, these men will be able to serve as effective chapter executives. Strong chapters tend to hold elections only once a year.

The seven officers elected by the chapter all have public titles that are indicative of the nature of their duties. These titles are: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Senior Steward, Junior Steward, Secretary and Scholarship Chairman.

Each officer in a well-organized chapter is responsible for certain functions. Each should carry out his duties to the best of his abilities. A good chapter expects its leaders to lead by example. Descriptions of the basic responsibilities of each officer follow.

PRESIDENT

A chapter president must be chosen for experience and ability, not personal popularity. A good president will take firm control of his duties and demand the utmost effort from his officers and other members of the chapter. By demonstrating organized, firm and decisive leadership, a good president earns support and respect. By running a disorganized administration, he only contributes to the deterioration of the chapter. Every president is responsible for assuring that the Executive Committee of chapter officers meets regularly prior to every chapter meeting. Additionally, the president should direct executive committee and chapter planning retreats at least annually, using the *Benchmarks of Excellence* program and the Memorial Trophy report form as a guide in the goal-setting process. (For more information on the Memorial Trophy as a planning guide, see the heading: "Memorial Trophy" within the Theta Xi Awards section of the chapter entitled "Our Fraternity Quest".)

The president's job is to direct, coordinate and supervise the concerted effort of the entire chapter. If he permits himself to be mired down in details, he fails in his principal job. The choice of the right man for each job; the instruction of each appointee on his duties; and the constant supervision of each appointee to see that he actually does his job completely — these are the president's real duties. How well he does them will measure the success of his term of office and the vitality of his chapter.

VICE PRESIDENT

In addition to assisting the president in the performance of his duties, the vice president has other specific responsibilities. In the area of chapter records, he acts as the recording secretary. He should assist the secretary and treasurer in completing the semiannual membership reports, and the Memorial Trophy Report in the spring. These three officers should cooperate in the preparation of these reports to prevent errors, ensuring that the Fraternity and chapter know the status of the local operation and each member. The vice president is also normally responsible for supervising the work of the committee chairmen, ensuring that committees are running smoothly and meeting regularly. Lastly, he should be the chapter's official representative to the Interfraternity Council (IFC), unless IFC By-Laws dictate otherwise.

TREASURER

In every organization, the treasurer's responsibility for collecting and disbursing money is paramount. Treasurers must be elected for their ability and integrity, and each must be certain his elected successor is fully prepared to assume responsibility for chapter funds. Theta Xi treasurers must keep accurate account of all funds belonging to their chapters, filing the proper statements and reports with the Fraternity Headquarters and the federal and state governments. They must approve the budgets for various events, collect members' bills and pay creditors. These duties make the treasurer a key figure in the chapter.

STEWARDS

The officers known as senior and junior stewards each hold special responsibilities regarding the operation of the chapter. Their duties vary as they are defined differently in each chapter's By-Laws. Special duties for the stewards directed by the president and executive committee often include one or two of the following: membership education chairman, house manager, kitchen manager, recruitment chairman and/or social chairman.

SECRETARY

As the title would indicate, the secretary takes care of all chapter correspondence. He is the official link to the outside (school, community, alumni, Fraternity Headquarters) and great care should be taken to elect a man capable of making a fine impression, both personally and through his writing, so the chapter will be judged favorably by all concerned. He should also become familiar with the basics of public relations. The secretary is also personally responsible for the chapter's membership records and various reports due to the Fraternity and the host institution.

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRMAN

The Scholarship Chairman is responsible for the scholastic progress of the chapter and for developing a program to ensure the proper atmosphere and attitude prevail for achievement of the highest grade point average possible. Scholarship records should be maintained for each member, and assistance offered whenever a downward trend appears. This officer also maintains associate member records and should report periodically to the membership educator, Big Brothers and chapter membership.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

In addition to the elected chapter officers, committee chairmen are appointed to handle special activities such as membership education, membership recruitment, social programming, intramural athletics, Homecoming, risk management, community service, alumni relations, Greek Week, and more.

An efficient chapter will have procedures that ensure proper reporting of the progress on each of these activities to the supervisory officer, to the executive committee, and the chapter.

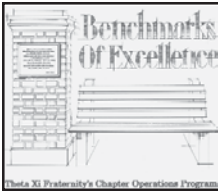
When given any of these assignments, one should be certain to get the work done in a timely and cooperative manner. Harmony is the keystone of the finest Theta Xi chapters.

NOTEBOOKS

All too often each new chapter administration wastes much of its time “reinventing the wheel” regarding officer and committee responsibilities. This situation can be remedied very simply by organizing individual notebooks. In order to ensure continuity in the quality and efficiency of chapter administration and ensure a smooth transition of offices, it is essential that each chapter officer and committee chairman keep a notebook during his term. An officer’s notebook, usually arranged in a three-ring binder, should contain the Theta Xi Guide for the office, as well as any other guides, materials, or contact information which might be helpful. Also included should be term calendars of events and activities that previous officers or chairmen directed, along with an evaluation of the relative success of each activity. Keeping records of past successes, as well as past failures, helps each new officer and committee chairman plan for a successful future while avoiding past mistakes.

CHAPTER PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

BENCHMARKS OF EXCELLENCE



The Benchmarks of Excellence program was introduced at the 127th Anniversary Convention in 1991. Benchmarks is a chapter self-evaluation, goal setting, and resource guide. It establishes general standards of chapter operations. The program provides a model to help build a successful chapter.

SCHOLARSHIP

Developing a scholarly mind is the highest priority in each member's quest for Theta Xi. The first of seven goals listed in "The Purpose of Theta Xi" is to develop "intellectual curiosity that insures the highest scholarship rating consistent with his ability." Scholarship occupies the forefront among Theta Xi activities because the Fraternity believes in the value of college education's contribution to the attainment of an individual's professional objectives. Scholarship builds successful college men who can then take the skills learned to their careers.

Theta Xi teaches its chapters to respect good scholarship and create an environment conducive to its attainment. The chapter is responsible for affiliating capable men and challenging their full intellectual capacity. In 1959, the *Ritual of Theta Xi* was amended to include position of the scholarship chairman. This is one of very few major changes made in the Ritual since the Fraternity was established in 1864, and demonstrates Theta Xi's ongoing commitment to academic achievement.

Fraternity living gives members an opportunity to exchange philosophies, values and other knowledge derived from personal experience. It creates a sharing of lives and values which can not take place within the confines of the formal classroom or dormitory.

Words of encouragement from within the bonds of Theta Xi will reinforce your desire to keep working, even after a discouraging test or grade report. A chapter scholarship program, motivated by the shared desire of Brothers to help each other learn, understand and grow, will provide personal support for your academic career. Recognition of your achievement within the chapter will stimulate you to achieve greater goals in education.

MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

The most important function of the chapter as a group lies in the selection of new members. Membership selection, or rush, is the lifeblood of the chapter and the Fraternity; it cannot be considered a one-man responsibility. The Brotherhood, and its future security, are far larger than any one Brother. When the whole chapter operates as a team, the final selection of members will be made from a larger prospective group.

Accordingly, the quality of membership will improve. Thus, with a large group from which to choose it truly becomes member selection. Too often, a chapter which rushes a small group will try to talk themselves and others into believing that quantity was sacrificed for quality. History shows that the most stable fraternity chapters are those which initiate approximately the same number of men each year and whose size is larger than the average in comparison with other fraternities on the campus.

The Fraternity has established a guide for recruitment entitled *More Good Men*, better known as MGM. The MGM guide provides a variety of ideas, strategies, and methods which enables the chapter recruitment chairman to develop a successful recruitment program.

MEMBERSHIP EDUCATION

Membership education is a continuous process in Theta Xi Fraternity. In addition to educating associate members on the responsibilities of membership, Theta Xi believes in constantly challenging initiated members with new knowledge, ideas and experiences. The Fraternity has designed three programs which address these ongoing needs: *Alpha Nine*, *Values into Action*, and *Brother to Brother*. Each program is described below.

ALPHA NINE

Alpha Nine, the official membership education program of the Fraternity, encompasses all of the undergraduate years, rather than just the weeks or months prior to initiation. *Alpha Nine* promotes the idea that the Fraternity can provide not only the knowledge necessary for new members' indoctrination, but also the education in areas such as career planning and goal-setting.

The *Alpha Nine* program is coordinated by the membership educator and implemented through a membership education committee. The program is flexible so that the educational topics outlined in each unit can correspond to Fraternity and campus events. The committee schedules topics according to chapter needs. For example, the committee might schedule a recruitment presentation one week prior to formal rush, or a study skills workshop two weeks before midterm examinations.

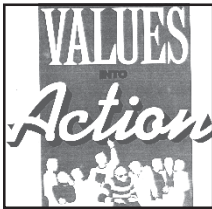


The Alpha Nine program was named in honor of Edward H. Morrison A9, who was the first new member to be recruited into Theta Xi.

The Associate Member Education Core Program is included in *Alpha Nine*. The Core Program is the only approved educational program for new members and is to be used within the 63-day maximum education period prior to initiation.

The objective of *Alpha Nine* is the continuous education of all members. It is important that the membership education committee and chapter constantly strive to achieve chapter unity, avoiding segregation of associate members into "classes" and assuring equal responsibilities for both initiated and associate members.

VALUES INTO ACTION



The Grand Lodge appointed a Special Committee on Values in 1988, which was to develop educational and enforcement programs to promote essential Fraternity values. Based on the analysis of chapter member survey responses, the committee developed the ten basic values and expectations listed in the Statement of Position on Fraternity Values, which was unanimously adopted at the 125th Anniversary Convention in St. Louis in 1989. Following the adoption of the statement a program entitled *Values into Action*, which promotes Fraternity values at the chapter level, was developed. The program consists of activities and exercises which facilitate careful thought and analysis of both personal and Fraternity values. The purpose of the program is to help make Fraternity values a part of each member's daily life. It is important that Brothers not only know the Fraternity's values, but live them.

BROTHER TO BROTHER



Theta Xi has created its own substance abuse awareness and intervention program. *Brother to Brother*, as it is entitled, is an educational program and a tool which Brothers can use throughout life if they should come in contact with friends or family members with substance abuse problems. *Brother to Brother* provides members with a five-step approach to initiate the recovery process of a chemically-dependent person. The five steps utilized in the approach are: education, recognition, intervention, referral and recovery. Each chapter should present the contents of the program at least annually to its membership.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

In today's society, Theta Xi chapters must develop charitable interests which bring positive results to the local community. Sponsoring activities on and off campus for Multiple Sclerosis or undertaking work projects with Habitat For Humanity, Theta Xi's two national service projects, are excellent ways to serve the community.

Many Theta Xi chapters plan special, non-holiday activities for needy individuals and groups. When these projects are executed properly, chapters find that members are the ones who really benefit most because they have been unselfish with their time, energy and talents in order to help someone else.

One fine way to involve the academic community, giving them a chance to view the positive aspects of fraternity for themselves, is through inviting faculty members and school administrators to meals and “fireside” discussions. By inviting faculty and administrators into our home, many learn for the first time that a fraternity can be a strong, contributing part of their campus. They can be shown that fraternities are not contrary to the aims of higher education, but a proponent of the host institution’s missions and goals.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Many individuals broaden their college and fraternity experience by participating in campus activities. It becomes a source of chapter pride when any of its members are involved in key activities such as student government, the campus newspaper, professional and honorary fraternities, ROTC, varsity athletics, and school shows.

Associate members interested in any phase of campus life should make their interests known. Chapter members already participating in campus activities will be able to assist associate members. This is an area where continuity of effort and commitment are essential to building a winning reputation. Diversity of experience within the membership provides the chapter with a wide variety of skills and abilities to accomplish its endeavors.

Every Theta Xi member is encouraged to take part in his chapter’s activities. Some participate in intramural athletics; some rehearse for weeks to prepare for Greek Week; others try to build the best homecoming or spring carnival display; and still others publish the chapter newsletter or plan parties and dances. A healthy chapter offers a variety of experiences which allows every member an opportunity to participate.

HOUSE APPEARANCE

The appearance of the chapter house is all-important. It is often easy to recognize a well-run chapter: the membership takes pride in keeping chapter house facilities looking first-class. Even older houses or converted residences can be renovated, decorated and maintained attractively. Good house maintenance and appearance are imperative to a successful chapter; this becomes especially evident when maintenance items are overlooked. In order to effectively maintain the physical plant, every member must participate in house improvement tasks.

It is important to make positive first impressions on all who visit the house. What rushees, parents and members of other Greek groups see at your house, often in very brief visits, affects how they feel about your group and what they will say about it to others. A well-lighted, well-cleaned, attractively-furnished first floor

means a great deal. How the chapter maintains the public areas of its home reflects the overall nature of the group.

Upstairs, in study and sleeping rooms, upkeep, cleanliness and order are also essential. Since you spend significant amounts of time studying and sleeping, it is important that neither of these functions are hindered. Make living areas as neat and comfortable as possible. Try quieting devices such as rugs, mats and stair runners to cut down distractions. Strive to make your house a pleasant, well-run, sharp-looking place. You'll benefit from it and so will everyone with whom you share it.

CHAPTER ADVISOR

The Constitution provides that “an alumni member shall be appointed by the national president as chapter advisor to each chapter and colony.” The By-Laws provide that the term-of-office of the chapter advisor shall run concurrently with that of the national president. The importance of the role of the chapter advisor is evidenced by the fact that each Advisor is entitled to vote at the National Convention. The only other individuals entitled to voting privileges are past national presidents, members of The Order of the Unicorn, members of the Grand Lodge, regional directors, and committee chairmen.

The function of the chapter advisor is to help train leaders, not to run the chapter himself. The principal value of the Fraternity as a social and educational institution lies in the opportunities and experiences which it provides to its members — permitting mistakes as well as successes. The advisor has an obligation to point out successes and mistakes and to help keep the latter from recurring and becoming excessive. The advisor must make his advice and support available in ways that do not interfere with the normal working of the chapter. He must work through the members, always attempting to help them achieve for themselves the results which they desire. In this way, the members gain experience and self-confidence.

Chapters are also encouraged to recruit additional alumni to serve as assistant advisors, thus providing the opportunity to share advisor duties and to provide more counsel to the chapter members.

Another advisory source for many chapters is the faculty advisor. Many colleges and universities require the chapter to recruit a faculty or staff member to serve as a sponsor and liaison to campus administrators. The individual may or may not be an initiated member, but should be utilized as a valuable resource for all chapter officers and members.

