

PREPARING YOUR CHAPTER ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Assign someone the responsibility; generally, each inter/national organization has a requirement for a chapter officer or a committee chairman to be responsible for alumni relations -- maintaining contact with the chapter alumni: that person should be responsible for maintaining the alumni database and for maintaining all contact (*i.e., newsletters, invitations, etc.*) with the alumni. Newsletters should be mailed to your alumni no less than twice a year

Your chapter alumni association, or even your chapter "alumni board" will undoubtedly assist you in coordinating all alumni newsletters and events (they frequently have a more vested interest than you do!) -- if you don't have an association or a board, now may be the time to put them together

What resources does the university offer that might help you in maintaining good alumni relations? Check with the university alumni office (frequently, they will provide you with mailing labels - a good reason for providing them with the whereabouts of your alumni - and may offer to mail a newsletter for your chapter)

Gather the information that you want to include in the newsletter; let others prepare articles, etc., but the alumni relations chairman is responsible for the content

Remember: keep the newsletter positive:

Tell the alums all the positive things about the chapter:

- Chapter GPA as compared to other fraternities / sororities on campus and compared to the all men's / all women's average
- members on dean's list or other academic honors, scholarships, recognition, etc.
- members equal to or above the all fraternity / all men's GPA
- members holding elected office on campus; *i.e.,* Class officers, student government association, etc.
- members holding key positions on campus; *i.e.,* newspaper, yearbook, Model United Nations, etc.
- members on varsity teams
- members who have been accepted into honorary organizations, fraternities, Who's Who, etc.
- participation in service projects on campus and in the community; man-hours involved and/or dollars collected
- chapter size as compared to other fraternities / sororities on campus
- chapter standing in intramural sports
- chapter standing in Greek Week
- *etc., etc., etc.*

Tell the alums about other alums:

- Let them know of "missing" alums you have located; include their address and telephone number
- let them know of address/telephone number changes since the last directory was published
- who's gotten married, a promotion, a new job, some award or recognition (be sure to share this information with your inter/national organization and the university)
- feature a prominent alum or a key volunteer working with the chapter, involved on campus, etc.

Tell the alums about upcoming events

- Give them a calendar of key chapter events coming up, especially those that you would like them to attend - examples are: chapter anniversary, awards banquet, etc.
- give them a calendar of key alumni events coming up on campus for the next six months sponsored by the university and the university alumni association and the chapter - examples are: homecoming, greek reunions, etc.
- the more your alums know, and the earlier they know it, the more likely it is that they will participate

Some "don'ts" for your newsletter:

Don't ask for money; let alums ask alums for money, but you can charge for events sponsored by the chapter (however, it would be nice to "throw" an event once in a while)

Don't emphasize alcohol events, drugs, obscenities, etc.; Frequently this is a turn-off to alums; besides, their spouse may read the newsletter as well - you always want to portray a positive image, even to your alums

Don't include "inside" jokes and stories; you want your alums to be able to relate to what is going on in the chapter

Don't forget to include the cost of stationary, mailing labels, copying / printing, postage, etc. In your chapter budget

Some "dos for your newsletter:

Do send a copy to each of the chapter members; let them see what is being sent to their alums

Do send a copy to your inter/national organization; let them see that you are keeping in contact with your alums; some inter/national organizations have awards for their chapters with good alumni programs

Do send a copy to various university "officials"; i.e., the university president, the vice president of student affairs, the greek advisor, the vice president for institutional development,

Do send a copy to all volunteers who support your chapter; this includes your faculty advisor, chapter advisor, board members, your inter/national organizations local volunteers, etc. - they may not be alums of your chapter, but should be on your mailing list

Do send to anyone else you think might want to know what your chapter and your alumni are doing; this could include the university alumni association president, the chairman of the greek relations committee of the alumni association, other fraternity/sorority chapter presidents on campus, etc.

*The newsletter can be a great "pr" tool for your chapter,
If used effectively!*

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